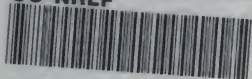
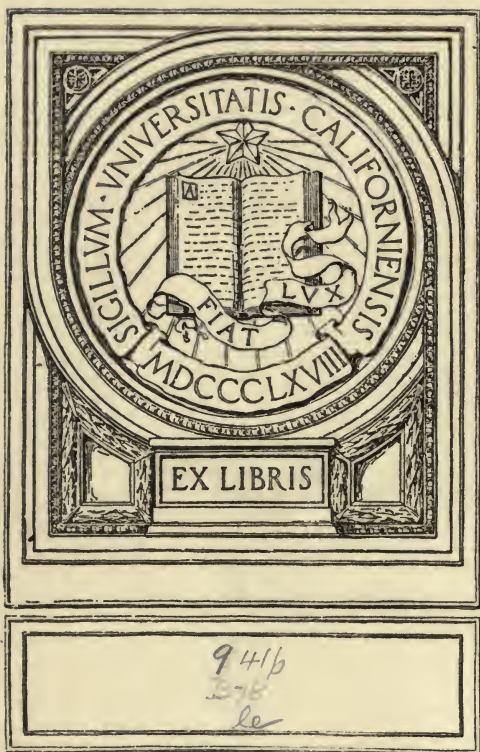


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no subject of poems

Art poetical 1. by association with a) passions
b) nature

2. properly but in less degree than nature

He should see that, if art is poetic by "association," so
is nature; the associating itself is the poetry

Substitution trick

no referring to Pope's work itself

2753

LETTERS
TO
LORD BYRON

ON A QUESTION OF
Poetical Criticism.

Third Edition, with Corrections.

"He that plays at BOWLS, must expect RUBBERS." *Old Proverb.*
"NATURE must give way to ART." *Song by a Person of Quality, see Pope's Works.*

TO WHICH ARE NOW FIRST ADDED,
THE
LETTER TO MR. CAMPBELL,
AS FAR AS REGARDS POETICAL CRITICISM;
AND THE
ANSWER TO THE WRITER IN THE
QUARTERLY REVIEW,
AS FAR AS THEY RELATE TO THE SAME SUBJECT.

Second Editions.

TOGETHER WITH
AN ANSWER TO SOME OBJECTIONS, AND FURTHER
ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY THE REV. WM. L. BOWLES.

LONDON:
HURST, ROBINSON, AND CO. CHEAPSIDE.

1822.

LETTERS

AND

POETRY

OF

THE

REV. JOHN

WATSON

OF

THE

MINISTRY

OF

THE

CHURCH

OF

BY THE REV.

JOHN

WATSON

PRINTED BY RICHARD CRUTTWELL, ST. JAMES'S-STREET.

ADVERTISEMENT.

I Trust Lord BYRON will excuse me for having made somewhat free with the singular Motto to his book. It is, "I will play at BOWLS with the SUN and the MOON."—Old Song!

A "certain Family" had been spoken of, in the Quarterly Review, as "ringing changes on NATURE for two thousand years!" The Critic who professed such ignorance and disdain of external nature, was doubtless sincere!

By a somewhat ludicrous coincidence, it happens that the "arms" of this "family," spoken of with such contempt, are, literally, a "sun and moon," a Sun, OR, and Moon, ARGENT, secundum ARTEM.

It is, therefore, with this SUN and MOON in Heraldry that Lord BYRON, I have no doubt, plays at "BOWLS!" Not with the SUN and MOON in Nature!!

In return, I have only ventured to take, as an inscription to my shield, his Lordship's motto, with a trifling alteration:

He that plays at "Bowls" (with the "SUN and MOON")
must expect "RUBBERS;"

Which is only an old "proverb," for part of an OLD SONG! As for any alteration in his heraldic motto, I should not dare to say, NE CREDE BYRON; but, I think, in this game, I shall take from his Lordship's arms the "SUPPORTERS;" though I do not wish to touch a feather of the GRACEFUL and GLITTERING CREST OF HIS HIGH POETICAL CHARACTER.

With respect to the other motto I have adopted,

"NATURE must give way to ART!" it is taken, as most readers must know, from a certain Song by POPE, which has been generally conceived to have been written by POPE in *banter* and *ridicule* of the person whose name it bears, a *Person of Quality*! It is now, I think, put beyond a doubt, that GILBERT WAKEFIELD was right, and the song was written by POPE seriously! The first stanza, therefore, I shall give the reader:

Song, by a PERSON OF QUALITY.

"Fluttering spread your purple pinions,

"Gentle CUPID, o'er my heart;

"I, a slave in thy dominions!

"NATURE MUST give way to ART!"

It would be important for the reader to keep in mind one plain distinction, in reading what is here offered. Whatever is *picturesque* is so far *poetical*; but all that is "poetical" does not require to be "picturesque." Lord BYRON would never have said, "What painter does not break the sea with a boat," &c. if he had remembered this distinction.

It would be important for the reader to keep in mind
one plain distinction of words which is important
in this case. The word "distinction" is used in two
ways. It may mean a difference in kind, or it may
mean a difference in degree. The word "distinction"
is used in the first sense in the following passage:
"The distinction between the two is not a difference
in kind, but a difference in degree."

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DEFINITIONS.

THOUGH I have too much respect for my readers to think any definitions of common expressions necessary, yet I have been induced to premise some, to obviate, as far as possible, the *cavils* and *quibbles* that would *confound* words when they cannot answer arguments.

“What is sublime and beautiful in nature.”

Those objects in the visible world, which we immediately refer to the ALMIGHTY Maker, and which give an idea of his power; as the sea, &c.

Objects in themselves magnificent or beautiful, as the sun,—the lights of evening or morning,—the rainbow,—&c. &c.

“Images.”

The representation of these objects in the colours of poetry. These, indeed, may be represented by a wretched artist; but if I speak of a *picturesque*

so p. has no image

spot, I do not think of a picture or representation of it by a dauber, but consider it as it would appear from the pencil of a GAINSBOROUGH.

“ *Poetical.* ”

That which has the same reference to poetry, as that which is called picturesque has to painting.

That which is adapted to the higher kinds of poetry, as *human passions*, emotions, sympathies; all that elevates and ennobles the sentiments; all that affects the heart, or enchants the fancy; as Othello, Macbeth, King Lear, Tempest, Midsummer Night's Dream.

The subjects of the different kinds of poetry, as of epic, dramatic,—of the ode, the elegy, or of descriptive,—didactic, or satirical poems. That subject the highest, as MILTON's Paradise Lost, which unfolds the greatest and most awful events; sets before us the most powerful agents; which is most stupendous in the conception, and arduous in management, as a poem.

“ *Execution.* ”

The successful management through all its parts, to the utmost finish, of that, whatsoever it be, which is the subject of poetry, whether the subject relate to imagination, passions of nature, or manners of life.

“ *Works of Art.* ”

Those visible objects, which we do not refer immediately to the Great Maker of all things, but which are secondary, as invented or fashioned by man, from the lowest mechanical arts to the highest imitation of the great prototypes from the hand of the ALMIGHTY, in painting, statuary, &c. For though it may be true, strictly speaking, that every thing may be called nature, as even a house for instance, because the lime, the stones, and the hands that put them together, are from *nature*; yet, in common parlance, the difference is sufficiently obvious.

By *manners*, I mean those modes of life which are more adapted to satire, wit, and *comedy*; which leave the more impassioned province of the Muse, to

circuler

“ Shoot folly as it flies,
“ And catch the Cynthia of the minute,”

“ *Poetry.* ”

Not merely metre or measure. I need not adduce the *disjecti membra poetæ* of HORACE; but I certainly do not mean any where by *poetry*, PROSE, such as certain criticisms and metaphysical quibbles, which these definitions alone will go a great way to nullify.

-- *On the* --

These things, which we do not see, are
 actually in the *lowest* degree of all things, but
 which are necessary, as indicated or indicated by
 man, from the lower material into the highest
 formation of the great universe from the hand of
 the Almighty, in passing, as they are, that
 though it may be true, actually speaking, that
 every thing may be called matter, as a house
 for instance, because the *form*, the *shape*, and the
 hands that put these together, are from matter;
 yet in common parlance, the difference is well
 easily shown.

He answers, I know, these words of the which
 are made, which is made, but not exactly
 which have the same important meaning of the
 which is

-- *On the* --

and only the *form* of the *shape*.

-- *On the* --

Not exactly matter or substance, I shall not
 know the *shape* of matter, as I know
 but I certainly do not see it, where the *shape*
 is, and as matter is, and as matter is,
 which is, which is, which is, which is,
 from the *shape*.

Prefatory Address to the Reader.

IN this third edition of the Letters to Lord BYRON I have thought it right to include the original Letter to Mr. CAMPBELL, to which so many allusions have been made in the course of this discussion, and also the answer to the Quarterly Review, that the reader may see, placed together, and in one view, the whole of what has been advanced on this subject of poetical criticism, and be better enabled to judge of the whole question ; which, rejecting extraneous and some personal matter, I have confined, as far as possible, to fair argumentation.

I need not, perhaps, say, that the question arose respecting the highest rank to be assigned to POPE among the greatest poets.

If my positions were true, that images drawn from the sublime and beautiful in nature were more poetical, that is, (to avoid cavil,) more adapted to

2 the highest order of poetry than any works of art; and further, if it were true that passions, including all that is sublime in sentiment, or affecting in pathos, were more poetical than *manners* of life; provided always, that in estimating the rank of the respective poets, regard should be had to the subject and execution. Then the poet who had conceived and executed an epic like *Paradise Lost*, or dramas, like *Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Tempest*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It*, would be placed higher in the rank of his art than he could be who had written any satires, moral epistles, —one the most pathetic and beautiful in this style of poetry, one heroi-comical poem, unrivalled in the world,—with whatever consummate felicity of execution all or any of these poems might be finished.

This, to the best of my understanding is a fair and impartial state of the question.

In order to ascertain this more decidedly, I laid down two propositions; the first, indeed, only introductory to the second.

The first proposition, which I took for granted would be admitted, was this,—that IMAGES drawn from what is sublime or beautiful in nature were more adapted to POETRY than any images drawn from art.

If this were so; in like manner, PASSIONS were more adapted to POETRY than *artificial manners*; the one being inherent in NATURE through all ages,

the other that of the day. But I took especial care, in framing these propositions, to make one obvious distinction, that is, if a poem of the nature of Paradise Lost were not executed with talents equal to the subject, that then a more perfect execution of an inferior subject would entitle the successful poet of the humbler province in his art to a far higher rank than could be given to him, who, like BLACKMORE, undertook a great subject without adequate powers of execution. This is the whole question. Mr. CAMPBELL omitted any mention of the main proposition, and considered me as confining my ideas of poetry to minute painting from external nature; whereas the whole *gist* of my argument was laid on PASSIONS. This was doing me *injustice*, on the part of Mr. CAMPBELL, from *inadvertence*: I would not hear his enemies say otherwise. But he says, "he has not misrepresented me;" and therefore, having stated the fact, I shall say no more till I hear his reply; but with deference to him, the point seems to resolve itself into yes or no. Did he, or did he not, speak of me as confining my ideas of poetry to inanimate descriptions? The reader will see with what justice, when he reads my second and main proposition, that *passions* are *more poetical* than *manners*: And I should think there could not be a doubt, by any one who reads the propositions, that I consider *passions* far more essential to poetry than *mere description*; which,

not

Cl
and

Jan

indeed, through every part of my edition of POPE, I placed as the least and lowest department in poetry.

Mr. CAMPBELL, confining himself to the first proposition, instanced, as it was natural he should, the effect of a ship first launched on the ocean, to prove that works of art are not less adapted to poetry than what is beautiful and magnificent in nature. This example is discussed in the letter first addressed to him ; and his objection, that I confined my ideas of poetry to external nature, is, I think, satisfactorily answered ; at least I shall think so, till I hear more satisfactory answers than Lord BYRON has yet produced.

With respect to a *misrepresentation*, suppose I had published an account of his own excellent and eloquent Lectures on Poetry, and stated, that he had confined all his ideas to descriptions of external nature, and introduced *nothing* concerning *passions* ; suppose I had written an essay to prove that SHAKESPEARE and SOPHOCLES, according to his ideas, must have been excluded ; if I had done so from *inadvertence*, should I not have instantly acknowledged it ? should I have said I had *not misrepresented* him ? Mr. CAMPBELL, of course, must judge for himself. I have never spoken a disrespectful word of him, though I felt it my duty, in justice to myself, when his triumph over me had been proclaimed in almost all the periodical publications, to shew, at least, that I could not have

been so very stupid, as in my definition of poetry to confine it to inanimate representations of external nature. If I had not answered myself, should I have put forward as arguments, what I must in my heart have disdained, the petty chicanery against verbal inaccuracies; or adopted what I must know to have been gross *falsifications* of statements? Should I have lauded such absurdities, such nefariousness? In my opinion, such conduct, more than any thing else, proves the utter imbecility of his cause.

A writer in the Quarterly Review, since known to be MR. D'ISRAELI, in an elaborate, but very indiscriminating article,—with flippancies that neither were becoming him, nor the publication in which they appeared, nor, I hope, applicable to my general character,—attempted to shew, that habits and manners of life, being exquisitely described as they are by POPE, ought to entitle him to the same rank in poetry with SHAKESPEARE and MILTON!

It was really difficult to cope with those whose true “no meaning puzzles more than wit.” The very sarcastic tone in which this writer indulged, towards a person who had never given him offence; who had stated his opinions fairly, and certainly not contemptuously towards any one; and who was not conscious of an attempt (he would be the first to scorn himself, if he had done so) to *depre-*

ciate POPE's character as a poet or a man; I trust, will excuse the "retribution" which needless provocation has excited. A criticism on the poetry of the Critic will be found subjoined to the reply to the Quarterly. As I had no other motive than to shew that *aggressive* criticism may be fairly met by *defensive* criticism, whenever he is convinced he first went beyond the fair line of critical discussion, I shall be ready to hold out the hand of entire forgetfulness.

I will not pay such disrespect to my readers as to suppose that they could have been for a moment convinced by Mr. D'ISRAELI's argumentations, that *manners* were as poetical as passions, and POPE of equal rank with MILTON. The insults *I* only could have felt; and feeling them as undeserved, I mention these as an excuse for *my criticisms* on *him* in return.

Lord BYRON, resolved, according to what he says in his letter, that, his name being introduced, the "fray should not be without him," comes forward next, for I pass over a disgraceful creature of mere vulgarity and scurrility.

Lord BYRON comes next, and with imposing brilliancy supports the paradox, that *works of art* selecting of course the most perfect in the world, are equal, if not superior, to any works of nature; making this mistake *in limine*, that I had spoken of *bare un-selected* nature, which I never did.

He has adduced his arguments, and I have answered. I had no "occasion to gnaw my pen," for the answer was written in three days, *currente calamo*, and for this reason, because I well knew if the answer had not come out by the end of the month, the whole periodical press would have echoed my defeat.

The arguments that have been offered in answer to Lord BYRON's shewy and rhetorical paradoxes are before the reader. But behold my friend, the Quarterly, again! *sed quantum mutatus ab illo Hectore!* from that D'ISRAELI, at whose "hectoring" I felt, indeed, indignant. The language now is at least that of courtesy, of gentlemanly courtesy, towards me, however bitter against my disinterested but then unknown supporter.

To shew "how LITTLE ENMITY" the Quarterly has for me, they will not quote what was said in my favour!! And not to be outdone in generous contention, as they will *not* quote what is said, I will, *coute qu'il coute!*

Extracts from a Kit-Cat.

"Against the Quarterly Review and Mr. GILCHRIST, however, Mr. BOWLES would have more serious causes of complaint. By this latter person he has been attacked in terms of such indecent scurrility, as is hardly ever met with in the annals of criticism," &c. &c.

"We will venture to assert, notwithstanding all the virulent invective and elaborate abuse, Mr. BOWLES has still the best of the argument."

"His reply to his noble opponent has settled the question beyond the possibility of a rejoinder,"* &c.—*Life of Addison.*

"Mr. B. has been accused of wantonly vilifying POPE on all occasions. Lord BYRON, it would seem, first found out this; then came Mr. CAMPBELL; and subsequently the whole bevy of magging scribblers joined in the cry! The reply to Mr. CAMPBELL has, however, put the question at rest, save with those learned Thebans, of whom it may be said,

"That e'en though vanquish'd they can argue still."

Kit-Kat.

It is said, that *they have the "vanity" to think differently respecting the controversy between Lord BYRON and myself!* I am, therefore, to suppose they could, if they would, do what I am persuaded neither Lord BYRON nor Mr. CAMPBELL can do, —*prove*, by fair and manly argumentation, without petty cavils, that art is generally more poetical, more adapted to the higher orders of poetry, than nature; manners and habits of a given period in

* Those who have followed after Lord BYRON and Mr. CAMPBELL, GILCHRIST, M'DERMOT, *et hoc genus omne*, put me in mind of SWIFT's fable of the pippins swimming in an inundation:

"A new-fall'n ball of horse's dung,

"Mingling with apples in the throng,

"Said to a pippin, plump and prim,

"SEE, BROTHER, HOW WE APPLES SWIM!"

society more *poetical* than passions ; and that POPE, therefore, must be “in the same file with SHAKESPEARE and MILTON. Can they do this? If LORD BYRON could not, and whether he could is left to the judgment of the public, I doubt whether the most chosen of the phalanx could.

Let us first give a very brief summary of what LORD BYRON has done. Passing over the long story of the sea, ship, &c. he took me to the coast of Attica ; he pointed to Athens, and the Acropolis, and said, “there are works of art ! what would the mountains be without them ?” I answered, That was no argument against a general position ; he took particular works, whose remains were *poetical*, not as works of art merely, but as affecting the passions by a thousand associations ; and he compared these, the sublimest wrecks of ancient glory, with the *identical* spot where they stood. That was no comparison : divest them of associations, and bring them to the Cordelleiras.

He pointed to the *Temple of Theseus*. I answered, Take the TEMPLE OF NATURE, and I have no doubt which will be thought the *more poetical*.

He took the spear of ACHILLES, and said, “what a *poetical* spear !” I answered, It was one of the least *poetical* spears in HOMER for a great warrior ; and asked, which he thought more poetical, the *spear*, or the *spear's owner* ?

He took up "Mrs. UNWIN's needle," and said, What a *needle*! how poetical! COWPER's *trees* are all twaddle; but this *needle* is a needle indeed, connected with darning of stockings! images of "in-door NATURE!!" I answered, No one, in feeling an interest on account of this humble relic of the old lady, ever thought of the "darning stockings," but of the desolate heart of him, who, looking on this relic, remembered with a tear the general character of its departed owner. I asked him, if the recollection of darning stockings rendered it poetical, whether the following stanza would not have been most poetical?

"My small-clothes, oh! departed friend,

"My shirt, which I so oft did rend,

"My stockings thou no more shalt mend,

"My MARY!"

He took me to the deserts of Egypt, and asked, Why was not Salisbury Plain as poetical as the deserts of Egypt? I answered, Solitude, extent, and associations of the deepest interest, made the vast plains of Egypt poetical; but Salisbury Plain was crossed by a hundred turnpikes; in every road were post-chaises, mail-coaches, footmen in gilt buttons, &c. objects in artificial life!

He pointed to the Tower on the Thames for making Patent Shot, and said it would be as poetical as Westminster Abbey, if it had the same archi-

at needle
if poetical
& of course

ture ! I answered, it would not, let the architecture be what it might ; and defied him to make it as *poetical in description*, to say nothing of the associations, unless he kept out of sight *all its uses* ! I instanced the ode in CHATTERTON :

“ Fiery o’er the MINSTER glare !”

and asked him, whether it would have been as *poetical*, if the poet had said,

“ And fiery o’er the GLASS-HOUSE glare !”

supposing a glass-house was the same in architecture.

He then shewed his Heathen Gods, Apollo, &c. I said, The Jupiter in VIRGIL, *nimborum in nocte*, would scatter them to atoms ! Then he took up ANTINOUS’ head, and cried, here is a “ *supernatural, super-artificial* head !” I said “ that was TWADDLE !” requested him to describe the said head, as he had spoken of Venus, in Childe Harold, “ raining kisses,” and then we shall see how much in his description was from nature, and how much from art !

I need not go on ; but to prevent the mere verbal cavils of pragmatistical stupidity, I ask, whether any of these images from *art*, adduced by Lord BYRON, are equally “ *adapted to poetry* ?” I ask, whether my answers are answers or not ? If they are *not answers*, let him or any one answer them again, meeting them, one and all, as fairly as I have stated them !

Now, can the Quarterly Reviewer give a fair and complete rejoinder? One obscure man, with an odd name, has attempted it; and Mr. CAMPBELL has publicly, in his capacity as editor of a public journal, pretended to advocate arguments and a mode of reasoning, that I believe he in his heart disdains. If these are the best arguments, I have the worse opinion of his cause, and not the better of his own understanding and manliness of character. I have exposed some of the arguments, because Mr. CAMPBELL, not myself, has thought them worth notice.

But I would fain see what a more powerful, and I hope, among acknowledged scholars and gentlemen, a more candid opponent could do. I would fain see whether Mr. CAMPBELL's own ship could be defended; and who could so well defend it as he who has been called forth to stretch on the bed of critical torture my disinterested advocate!

CAMPBELL is "angry" without reason; Lord BYRON is lofty; D'ISRAELI is unequal; and GILCHRIST beneath notice.

I should not fear to meet this new and not unknown opponent, well knowing his power, but not unconscious of the goodness of my cause. What could I do, if the person appointed to defend Mr. CAMPBELL's ship in the Quarterly Review happened to be a Secretary of his Majesty's Admiralty? When I saw him bearing down with full

sail upon me, I might, perhaps, exclaim, in the words of MILTON,

“ But who is this, what THING of LAND or SEA,

“ That so bedeck’d, ornate, and gay,

“ Comes this way sailing,

“ Like a stately SHIP

“ Of Tarsus, bound for the isles

“ Of Java, or Garadi,

“ With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,

“ Sails fill’d, and streamers waving,

“ Courted by all the winds that hold them play?”

What could I do against such a ship of war, commanded by such a personage? Perhaps he was willing to shew the world, that as some “SECRE-
“TARIES” of late have been described as having nothing to do, except *mending a pen*, and *looking out of window* into the Park, he could not only, in these *piping* times of peace, *mend a pen*, but most effectually *employ* it! to preserve the metaphor, defend CAMPBELL’s ship, and sink and destroy mine! Though his arguments might appear *mountains*, they would, I have little doubt, at the first approach of truth and fair investigation, vanish, *not* like Lord BYRON’s shewy rhetoric, that, on discussion, vanished like Aladdin’s palace; but like certain impregnable mountains that were *sailed over* by Captain PARRY, when the Croker Mountains in a moment became what they are likely to remain, as long as ships and seas endure,—the Barrow Straits.

Whether it be so or not, I hope what is now said will be taken in good part, as a proof I have as

little "enmity" with any writer in the Quarterly, as he can have with me ; and hoping, moreover, that we may drop the weapons of contention, as he most ardently wishes, whose object has been, (though, *vexatus toties*, he has replied,)

"Along the cool sequester'd path of life,
"To keep the noiseless tenor of his way,"

Bremhill, 1822.

LETTER I.

MY LORD,

HORNE TOOKE, if I remember right, began his well-known letter to JUNIUS in these words: "Tragedy, Comedy, and Farce,—JUNIUS, " WILKES, and FOOTE,—against one poor parson, " are fearful odds." So I might say, Lord BYRON, and my two late assailants,—APOLLO, MIDAS,* and PUNCH,—are indeed fearful odds against a country clerk and provincial editor.

But to be more courtly:—in approaching your Lordship as a controversialist upon any point, I am well aware of the great talents opposed to me. I have read, very attentively, your Remarks on my Life of POPE, on the *first part* of my Vindication in the Pamphleteer, and on my PRINCIPLES of

* A writer in the Quarterly Review, who has reversed every principle of acknowledged criticism. If he be right, Horace is wrong!

"Who shall decide, when Doctors disagree?"

Poetical Criticism, which I had called (*foolishly*, in your Lordship's opinion) INVARIABLE.

I thank you, my Lord, for this opportunity of stating the grounds of my sentiments more explicitly, (which I know you would not intentionally pervert); and more particularly for the honourable and open manner in which you have met the questions on which we are at issue.

The late contest in which I have been involved, with those of a character so opposite, has tended to make this contrast of urbanity and honourable opposition more gratifying; but from you, my Lord, I was certain I should not meet coarse and insulting abuse, the foul ribaldry of opprobrious contumely, nor the petty chicanery that *purposely* keeps out of sight one part of an argument, and wilfully misrepresents another.*

Your opposition exhibits none of these little arts of literary warfare. Your letter is at once argumentative, manly, good-humoured, and eloquent.

I am afraid, however, that if those whom I have lately encountered might have thought that "your Lordship would decide the contest at once,"—in short, "hit the nail in the head, and BOWLES "in the head also,"—they will be somewhat disappointed.

* This mode of attack has been constantly pursued; and the same mode is still resorted to by those who think their arguments best supported by these means, or by verbal quibbles, or, what is worse, direct FALSIFICATION.

I must oppose your Lordship, *Marte meo*, and am not much afraid of the result; for, *magna est veritas, et prevalebit*.

Your observations, in answer to what I said of parts of POPE's moral character, may be comprised in few words. It was far from my heart to charge him with a "libertine sort of love," on account of the errors or frailties of youth. I disdained, in the Life of POPE, to make any allusion to CIBBER's well-known anecdote. It would have been fanatic or hypocritical in me to have done so. When I spoke of his "libertine kind of love," I alluded to the general tone of his language to Lady MARY, and many of those with whom he corresponded from youth to age. I suppressed, with indignation, the Imitation of HORACE, which I believe he wrote—the most obscene and daring piece of profligacy that ever issued from the press, since the days of CHARLES the Second. I deduced no trait of his character from it, though it was not written when youth and gaiety might, in some measure, have palliated the offence, but when he was forty-two years of age. But though I had no tincture, I hope, in my feelings, of hypocrisy, or fanaticism, I thought it a duty to society to touch on one prominent feature in his character, which shews itself in his correspondence.

As to the omission of the fact of his benevolence to SAVAGE, it was inadvertence,—*culpable*, I con-

fess ; but if I have spoken of his “ general benevolence,” I may be pardoned, I hope, for an omission, which, at all events, was not intentional ; but your Lordship’s animadversion on which I own to be just.

“ Should some more sober critic come abroad,
“ If wrong, I smile ; if right, I kiss the rod.”

Having touched on these points, I advance to meet your Lordship on the ground of those principles of poetical criticism, by which I adventured to estimate POPE’s rank and station in his art.

If I cannot prove those principles invulnerable, even when your Lordship assails them ; if I cannot answer all your arguments as plainly and as distinctly as you have adduced them ; the term “invariable” I shall instantly discard.

On the contrary, if, noticing any arguments *fairly*, I turn them against you ; if, without avoiding the full force of any, I rebut them satisfactorily ; I shall have more reason than ever to think those principles INVARIABLE, which even Lord BYRON cannot overturn.

I shall first place before your Lordship, and the public, my sentiments, as they stand recorded in the tenth volume of POPE’s Works. They are these : I have often quoted them in part, but I find it necessary, in consequence of so many gross falsifications, to transcribe the greater part, that what I

have said may be seen in connection, and under one view.

"I presume it will readily be granted, that 'all images drawn from what is *beautiful or sublime* in the works of NATURE, are MORE beautiful and sublime than any images drawn from ART;' and that they are therefore, *per se*, more poetical.*

"In like manner, those PASSIONS of the human heart, which belong to Nature in general, are, *per se*, MORE ADAPTED to the HIGHER SPECIES of Poetry, than those which are derived† from *incidental and transient*

* By "poetical," I mean, *passim*, "adapted to the higher species of poetry," as it is expressed in the second proposition.

The most contemptible of my opponents, *always excepting* one, has built up a laborious piece of ostentatious nonsense "to prove" that "no object is poetical" in art or nature, *per se*. The definition here given will *nullify* one half of his book at once; but I do not care one jot whether he has "*proved*" this, as he manfully asserts, or not. I said, "*I trusted it would be granted;*" but if it be not, I then appeal to those who *have so* portrayed certain objects, and whose descriptions of such objects are more sublime or beautiful than *they could* make them, with all their genius; from any objects of art. SHAKESPEARE could not describe a canal, and by his description make it *half so poetical* as he has made the wild and wandering river, in the Two Gentlemen of Verona; nor could he make the Two Gentlemen of Verona so poetical as Macbeth. Why? because the *subject* would not admit of it. And yet Mr. CAMPBELL advances, as an argument, such despicable nonsense.

† It should be, "than incidental and transient manners." Mr. CAMPBELL, in the New Monthly, thinks it an argument to attack this verbal inadvertence; thinking his ship *defended* by the *shift* of such a *side-wind*!

[MANNERS. A description of a Forest is more *poetical** than a description of a cultivated Garden; and the *Passions* which are pourtrayed in the Epistle of an Eloisa, render such a poem† more *poetical*, (whatever might be the difference of merit in point of execution,) *intrinsically* more *poetical*, than a poem founded on the characters, incidents, and modes of *artificial life*; for instance, the Rape of the Lock.

“ If this be admitted, the rule by which we would estimate POPE’s general poetical character would be obvious.

“ Let me not, however, be considered as thinking that the *subject alone* constitutes poetical excellency. The *execution* is to be taken into consideration at the same time; for, with Lord HARVEY, we might fall asleep over the “ *Creation*” of BLACKMORE,‡ but be alive to the touches of animation and satire in BOILEAU.

The *subject*, and the *execution*, therefore, are equally to be considered;—the one respecting the *Poetry*,—the other, the *art* and *powers* of the *Poet*. The *poetical*

* Supposing the description equally faithful.

† As to *subject*, of which only I am here speaking.

‡ Would the reader think it possible, after what has been so repeatedly said, that one obscure writer, who has lately come into the arena, has absolutely quoted the first part of this sentence, and left off before he came to the *full stop*, because BLACKMORE stared him in the face, and told him what *deliberate falsehood* it was to represent me as making the *subject alone* a proof of excellence MORE than the genius of the poet? To what miserable shifts is such a *perverter* reduced! *Triumphant* must my arguments be, or it would not be necessary to *falsify* them, in the very face of the sentence that stood before him, and upbraided his *wilful fraud*!

subject, and the *art* and *talents* of the Poet, should always be kept in mind ; and I imagine it is for want of observing this rule, that so much has been said, and so little understood, of the real ground of POPE's character as a Poet.

“ If you say he is not one of the first Poets that England, and the polished literature of a polished æra can boast,

Recte necne crocos floresque perambulat Atti
Fabula si dubitem, clamant perisse pudorem
Cuncti pene patres.

“ If you say that he stands *poetically* pre-eminent, in the highest sense, you must deny the principles of criticism, which I imagine will be acknowledged by all.

“ In speaking of the *poetical subject*, and the *powers of execution* ; with regard to the *first*, POPE cannot be classed among the highest order of poets ;* with regard to the *second*, none ever was his *superior*. It is futile to judge of *one* composition by the rules of *another*. To say that Pope, in this sense, is not a poet, is to say that a *didactic Poem* is not a *Tragedy*, and that a *Satire* is not an *Ode*. POPE must be judged according to the rank in which he stands, among those whose delineations are taken more from *manners* than from NATURE. When I say that this is his *predominant* character, I must be insensible to every thing exquisite in poetry, if I did not except, *instantly*, the Epistle of Eloisa : but this can only be considered according to its class ; and if I say that it seems to me superior to

* That is, not with the poets who have conceived and executed, created and embellished, an epic like *Paradise Lost*, of a tragedy like *Macbeth* or *Othello*

any other of the kind, to which it might fairly be compared, such as the Epistles of Ovid, Propertius, Tibullus, (I will not mention Drayton, and POPE's numerous subsequent Imitations;) but when this transcendent poem is compared with those which will bear the *comparison*, I shall not be deemed as giving reluctant praise, when I declare my conviction of its being infinitely superior to every thing of the kind, ancient or modern.

“ In this poem, therefore, POPE appears on the high ground of the Poet of Nature; but this certainly is not his *general* character. In the particular instance of this poem, how distinguished and superior does he stand! It is sufficient that *nothing of the kind** has ever been produced equal to it, for pathos, painting, and melody.”

Before I proceed, it will save myself and your Lordship some trouble, if I request you to remember, in casting your eye on this portion of the estimate of POPE's poetical character, four material points.

[1st. I speak not of NATURE GENERALLY, but of images SUBLIME or BEAUTIFUL in Nature;† and if

* *Of the kind.* I beg these words may be remembered.

† But I am told that there being no one image in art or nature more sublime or beautiful, poetically, than another, a consummate poet, like POPE, in execution, could make a “hog in a high wind,” grunting, probably, and with his tail erect, as sublime and beautiful in poetry, as the horses of ACHILLES in HOMER. I will only observe, that neither HOMER himself, nor his translator, could make a “silk purse of a sow's ear!”

your Lordship had only kept this circumstance in recollection, you would have seen, that your pleasant pictures of "the Hog in the high wind," the footman's livery, the Paddington Canal, and the pigsties, the horse-pond, the slop-basin, or ANY OTHER vessel, can avail you little in your position; for *natural* as these images might be, they are neither "*sublime* or beautiful;" and, notwithstanding the pleasantry and wit with which they are associated in your Lordship's imagination,

"It grieves me much, the clerk might say again,

"Who WRITES SO WELL, should ever WRITE IN VAIN."

2d. You will observe, that I mean by images taken from what is sublime and beautiful in nature, those not confined to the manners of any one period, but extended to Nature in general, and the passions in all ages.

3dly. You will observe, that, in speaking of the subject and execution of a poem, I do not pass over the *execution*; for otherwise, BLACKMORE would be a greater poet than POPE:—and if your Lordship had remembered this point, you would not have supposed I could ever consider FENTON, or any other tragedian of the kind, as great a poet as POPE, though FENTON wrote a middling tragedy, and POPE satires, &c.

And, 4thly. You will observe, that in *execution* I think no poet was ever superior to POPE;

though your Lordship thinks the *execution all*, and I do *not*, for reasons which will be given.

I now beg to place before you what follows, requesting you to observe that I most freely admit POPE's unquestioned rank in the pathetic part of poetry, concerning which my concluding remark* was,—“ In the particular instance of this poem, “ how distinguished and SUPERIOR does he stand. “ It is sufficient that nothing of the kind ever “ has been produced EQUAL TO IT for PATHOS, “ PAINTING, and MELODY!”

To the first part I called Mr. CAMPBELL's particular attention before ; but I am certain many mistakes would be prevented, if any opposer of another's opinion would only take the trouble to do him the justice of impartially examining what those opinions are. I therefore think it necessary, before I meet Lord BYRON, to shew where his most effective strokes seem to hit the hardest, and where they are wasted, not on my theory, but on the *winds*. I must hope, therefore, the reader will a little farther follow me.

* But this poem, unquestionably so unique and exquisite, can only entitle the author to the highest place among those who have written poems of the same kind—above OVID, TIBULLUS, PROPERTIUS, &c.; but surely not above, or in the *same* file, with the Poet of PARADISE LOST, or Shakespeare. I have ranked POPE before Dryden, so far from ever saying or thinking him *no great Poet*.

After the word "melody" my observations on POPE's poetical character proceed as follow :

why? { " From this exquisite performance, which seems to stand as the boundary between the poetry derived from the great and primary feelings of Nature, and that derived from Art, to Satire, whose subject wholly concerns existing manners, the transition is easy.* Nevertheless, as POPE has chosen to write Satires and Epistles, they must be compared, not as WARTON has, I think, injudiciously done with pieces of higher poetry, but only with things of the same kind. To say that the beginning of one of POPE's Satires is *not poetical*; to say that you cannot find in it, if the words are transposed, the "*disjecti membra poetæ*," is not criticism. The province of Satire is totally wide; its career is in artificial life; and therefore to say that satire is not poetry, is to say an epigram is not an elegy. POPE has written satires; that is, confined himself chiefly, as a poet, to those subjects with which, as it has been seen, he was most conversant; subjects taken from living man, from *habits and manners*, more than from *imagination and passions*.

subject and faculty { " The career, therefore, which he opened to himself was in the second order in poetry; but it was a line pursued by HORACE, JUVENAL, DRYDEN, BOILEAU; and if in that line he stand the *highest*, upon these grounds we might fairly say, with JOHNSON, 'it is superfluous to ask whether POPE were a poet.'

" From the poetry, which, while it deals in local manners, exhibits also, as far as the subject would

* I have taken the liberty, having no other opportunity, of correcting a few passages.

admit, the most exquisite embellishments of fancy, such as the machinery* of the Rape of the Lock, we may proceed to those subjects which are didactic.

“The abstract philosophical view is first presented, as in the Essay on Man. The ground of such a poem is philosophy, not poetry: the poetry is only the colouring, if I may say so; and to the colouring the eye is chiefly attentive. We hardly think of the philosophy, whether it be good or bad; whether it be profound or specious; whether it evince deep thinking or exhibit only in new and pompous array the ‘babble of the ‘Nurse.’ Scarcely any one, till a controversy was raised, thought of the doctrines; but a thousand must have been warmed by the pictures, the addresses, the sublime interspersions of description, and the nice and harmonious precision of every word, and of almost every line. Whether, as a system of philosophy, it inculcated fate or not, who would pause to inquire? but every eye read a thousand times, and every lip, perhaps, repeated,

“Lo the poor Indian!” &c.

“The Lamb thy riot,” &c.

“Oh Happiness,” &c.

and many other passages.

“All these *illustrative* and *secondary* images are painted from the source of genuine poetry—from NATURE, not from ART. They therefore, independent of powers displayed in the versification, raise the Essay on Man, considered in the abstract, into *genuine poetry*, although the *poetical* part is subservient to the *philosophical*.

* In a note to this poem, the reason is given why POPE’s airy spirits are *inferior* to SHAKESPEARE’s in *poetical* beauty.

“ The Moral Essays depart much farther from poetry so defined, as they exhibit particular casts and characters of man, according to different *habits* of existing society ; that is, of *artificial* life.

“ POPE was not less capable of pourtraying* the passions, as we have seen in the Epistle to Abelard, &c. by vividness of expression and colours, than others; but we must estimate what he *has done*, not what he *might have done*. Many, perhaps, may regret with me, that if he disdained

‘ in *Fancy’s* fields to wander long,
‘ But stoop’d to Truth, and moraliz’d the song;’

that he had not at least wandered *somewhat longer* among scenes that were congenial to the feelings of every heart; and that he should leave them for the thorns and briars of ineffectual satire and bitterness; quitting for these such scenes as

‘ The Paraclete’s white walls and silver springs;’

like his great predecessor in poetry, MILTON, who left the ‘ Pastures of Peneus, and the Pines of *Ætna*,’ to write ‘ Tetrachordon,’ and to mingle in the malignant puritanical turbulence of the times.†

“ When we speak of the poetical character, derived from passions of *general Nature*, two obvious distinctions must occur, without regard to Aristotle;—those which, derived from the passions, may be called *pathetic*, and those which, derived from the same source, may be called *sublime*.

* I have omitted some unimportant points.

† WARTON.

“ Of the pathetic, no one (considering the Epistle of Eloisa alone) has touched the chords so tenderly, so pathetically, and so melodiously. As far as this goes, POPE, therefore, in poetical and musical expression, has *no competitor*.

“ We will now proceed to consider those passions which are equally the subject of genuine poetry, and on which are founded (I do not say Epic or Tragic excellence, for these POPE declined, but) that species of poetic sublimity, which gives life and animation to the Ode.

“ In this respect, I believe, no one who ever thought of ALEXANDER's Feast, or the Bard of GRAY, could for a moment imagine POPE *pre-eminent*. Before these he sinks, as much as any other writer, whose subject was pathetic, sinks before him. His Odes for the Duke of BUCKINGHAM, though elegant, are wholly unworthy to be classed as the compositions of a superior Lyric Poet.

“ In what has been said, I have avoided the introduction of picturesque description; that is, accurate representations from *external objects* of Nature: but if the premises laid down in the commencement of these reflections be true, no one can stand *pre-eminent* as a great descriptive poet, unless he has, not only a heart susceptible of the most pathetic or exalted feelings of nature, but, *an eye attentive to, and familiar with,* every external appearance that she may exhibit, in every change of season, every variation of light and shade.* He who has not an eye to observe these, and

* I beg it to be here observed, and I particularly request Mr. CAMPBELL, if he condescend to read this, to remember, that even

who cannot with a glance distinguish every diversity of every hue in her variety of beauties, must so far be deficient in *one of the essential qualities* of a poet.

[“ Here POPE, from infirmities, and from physical causes, was particularly deficient. When he left his own laurel circus at Twickenham, he was lifted into his chariot or his barge; and with weak eyes, and tottering strength, it is physically impossible he could be a *descriptive* Bard of the most eminent kind. Where description has been introduced among his poems, as far as his observation could go, he excelled; more could not be expected. In the descriptions of the cloister, the scenes surrounding the melancholy convent, as far as could be gained by books, or suggested by imagination, he was eminently successful; but even here, perhaps, he only proved that he could not go far: and

‘ The streams that shine between the hills,

‘ The grotts that echo to the tinkling rills,’

were possibly *transcripts* of what he could most easily *transcribe*,—his own views and scenery.

in descriptive poetry, so far from confining my ideas of excellence in this case to mere representations of external nature, I require, even here, before I should call a poet pre-eminent, a heart susceptible of pathetic and exalted feelings. I confess the fault, of he “leaves,” &c.; but in the notes to POPE, so far from thinking it always right to *particularize* even in *description*, I have said, “one of the great arts of a true poet is to know “when to be *specific*, and when *general*.” ΝΟΤΙΣ ΕΟΙΚΩΣ* is SUBLIME; yet would not be so, if the image were made *more specific*. The moonlight scene is particular; and would lose almost all its beauty, if it were *less* in detail.

* The first book of the Iliad; the translation of which by POPE has been so often quoted, “As when the moon,” &c.

But how different, how minute is his description, when he describes what he is master of: for instance, the game of Ombre, in the Rape of the Lock? This is from *artificial life*; and with artificial life, from his infirmities, he must have been chiefly conversant. But if he had been gifted with the same powers of observing outward Nature, I have no doubt he would have evinced as much accuracy in describing the appropriate and peculiar beauties, such as nature exhibits in the Forest* where he lived, as he was able to describe, in a manner so novel, and with colours so vivid, a game of cards.†

“ It is for this reason that his Windsor Forest, and his Pastorals, must ever appear so defective to a lover of Nature.

“ POPE, therefore, wisely left *this part* of his art, which THOMSON, and many other poets since his time, have cultivated with so much *more* success, and turned to what he calls the ‘Moral’ of the Song.‡

“ I need not go regularly over his works; but I think they may be generally divided under the heads I have mentioned;—*Pathetic, Sublime, Descriptive, Moral, and Satirical.* *Eliza*

✓
N [“ In the pathetic, *poetically* considered, he stands highest; in the sublime, he is deficient; in descriptions from Nature, for reasons given, still more so. He therefore pursued that path in poetry which was more congenial to his powers, and in which he has shone without a rival.

* Windsor Forest.

† See Rape of the Lock, description of Ombre.

‡ ‘But turn’d to truth, and moraliz’d the song.’

“ We regret that we have little more truly pathetic, from his pen, than the Epistle of Eloisa; the Elegy to the unfortunate Lady; and let me not forget one of the sweetest and most melodious of his pathetic effusions, the Address to Lord OXFORD:

‘ Such were the notes thy once-lov’d Poet sung.’

“ With the exception of these, and the Prologue to Cato, there are few things in POPE of the order I have mentioned, to which the recollection recurs with particular tenderness and delight.

“ When he left these regions, to unite the most exquisite machinery of fancy with the descriptions of *artificial life*, the Rape of the Lock will, first and last, present itself;—a composition, as JOHNSON justly observes, the ‘most elegant, the most airy,’ of all his works; a composition, to which it will be in vain to compare any thing of the kind. He stands alone, unrivalled, and possibly never to be rivalled. All POPE’s successful labour of correct and musical versification, all his talents of accurate description, though in an inferior province of poetry, are here consummately displayed; and as far as artificial life, that is, manners, not passions, are capable of being rendered poetical, they are here rendered so, by the fancy, the propriety, the elegance, and the poetic beauty of the Sylphic machinery.

“ This ‘delightful’ poem, as I have said, appears to stand conspicuous and beautiful, in that middle state, where poetry begins to leave Nature, and *approximates to local manners*. The Muse has, indeed, no longer her great characteristic attributes, pathos or sublimity; but

she appears so interesting, that we almost doubt whether the garb of elegant refinement is not as captivating, as the most beautiful appearances of Nature."

I have placed before the public, in one point of view, the greater part of what I advanced as the ground-work of my judgment on POPE's rank in poetry; and I can ask whether they observe any symptoms of detraction or depreciation? I have spoken of the sublime, the pathetic, the moral, the satirical, and the descriptive, in poetry; *putting the descriptive province last.*

Now in your letter, my Lord, you have said nothing of the SUBLIME of poetry, as distinguishing the great Poet, whose eminence in his art has led to this discussion; but I affirm, that in the pathetic, as he yields (and the distance is great) to SHAKESPEARE, the variety of pathos in SHAKESPEARE being considered; yet, if we view POPE's poems together, and remark his consummate EXECUTION of all he performed, though he is INFERIOR to MILTON, and must be so, from the SUPERIOR GRANDEUR of MILTON's subject, the greater exertion of talents required, "*according to the universal consent of the critics,*" and the EQUAL execution; yet in one particular branch of his art, *sublimity*, POPE yields to DRYDEN, as well as to these great poets; and in another particular branch of his art,—the accurate representation of pictu-

resque imagery from external nature,—he yields to THOMSON and COWPER.

As to sublimity, you will see I have spoken of his Ode, compared with one of DRYDEN's. Will you venture to say, the Ode for Music by POPE is equal to the Ode for Music by DRYDEN, Alexander's Feast, or that Ode spoken of so enthusiastically by Dr. JOHNSON? I think you will hardly do this; and if you do, I believe, my Lord, no critic in England, or Europe, will agree with you.

I must here make one observation on DRYDEN's Ode on the death of Mrs. KILLEGREW. JOHNSON speaks of the first stanza as full of enthusiasm, but his criticism is very inappropriate. I will venture to point out one cause of its sublimity. Addressing the departed spirit, the poet exclaims,

"Whether adopted to some neighbouring star,
 "Thou ROLL'ST ABOVE US in thy WAND'RING race;
 "Or, in procession fix'd and regular,
 "MOVEST WITH THE HEAV'NS' MAJESTIC PACE."

[These are the images from the sublime of nature, which give this ode its exalted character. I shall quote the first lines.

"Thou youngest virgin daughter of the skies,
 "Made in the *last promotion of the blest*;
 "Whose palms, new-pluck'd from Paradise,
 "In spreading branches more sublimely rise,
 "Rich with immortal green above the rest:
 "Whether adopted to some neighbouring star,
 "Thou roll'st above us in thy wand'ring race;
 "Or, in procession fix'd and regular,
 "Movest with the heav'ns' majestic pace;

" Or, call'd to more superior bliss,
 " Thou tread'st with seraphims the vast abyss;
 " Whatever happy region is thy place,
 " Cease thy celestial song a little space."

Now take the stanza of a quite opposite charater.

" The sylvan scenes of herds and flocks,
 " And fruitful plains, and barren rocks ;
 " Of shallow brooks that flow'd so clear,
 " The bottom did the top appear ;
 " Of deeper, too, and ampler floods,
 " Which as in mirrors shew'd the woods ;
 " Of lofty trees, with sacred shades,
 " And perspectives of pleasant glades,
 " Where nymphs of brightest form appear,
 " And shaggy satyrs standing near, }
 " Which them at once admire and fear.
 " The ruins too of some majestic place,
 " Boasting the pow'r of ancient Rome or Greece,
 " Whose statues, friezes, columns, broken lie,
 " And, though defac'd, the wonder of the eye ;
 " What NATURE, ART, bold fiction ere durst frame,
 " Her forming hand gave feature to the name."

The commencement is lofty and majestic, and the *execution* goes on *pari passu* with the subject ; and the subject is from the most glorious objects of contemplation in Nature. In the other stanza quoted, observe that the lady's art in painting as well as poetry is set before us, and this is done by making the subject of her pictures appear as in the living landscapes of NATURE :

" The shallow brooks that flow'd so clear, &c.
 " Of deeper, too, and ampler floods,
 " Which as in mirrors shew'd the woods ;
 " The perspectives of pleasant glades,
 " Where nymphs of brightest form appear,
 " And shaggy satyrs, &c."

Then the picturesque ruins are presented.

“ The ruins too of *some majestic place,*

“ Boasting the pow’r of *ancient Rome or Greece,*

“ Whose *statues, friezes, columns, broken lie, &c.*”

Dr. JOHNSON says, “ the other stanzas are very “ inferior,—inferior indeed:” and why are these superior? for this reason, because the highest views of human contemplation are opened in the first stanza, picturesque beauty in the last, and both according to NATURE.

The conclusion of this ode is in the high strain of the beginning ; and yet, as objects of artificial life are less poetical than passions which belong to general nature, the mind hardly admits the idea of “ the last promotion,” in the first stanza, or the word “ *assizes*,” relating to the great day of judgment, in the last; because with the expression “ *assizes*” are associated the ideas of *artificial* life, the “ judge’s coach,” and the javelin men.

I will now only request your Lordship to keep in mind what has been laid down: that art is poetical, but nature, in her sublime or beautiful features, with all their kindred associations, *more* so ; that art, in its combined appearances, is most poetical when connected *with associations or views of* NATURE, and always, and under all circumstances, POETICAL, (unless the image be vulgar,) when AS-

SOCIATED WITH EMOTIONS and PASSIONS of the
HUMAN HEART.

These are my premises: and having laid them down so as they cannot but be inferred from my original observations,* unless garbled, I come to meet your Lordship on the fair ground of controversy.

On the subject of POPE's poetical character we agree. You say he is inferior to MILTON and SHAKESPEARE. This is all I asked. But the subject of our present discussion is, I think, at all events interesting.

The first question is, "whether images drawn "from what is sublime or beautiful in art or nature," be, *per se*, the more poetical.

Upon this first point we join issue, and stand opposed. You have taken this first axiom, which I thought, if well considered, would not be contended, and have, without periphrasis, promptly and powerfully opposed it. But remark, this is only the first part of a general proposition, as will be seen by referring to what I have said. The other part will be, perhaps, more clearly explained, as we proceed. But first of the first.

* I beg these may be remembered,

LAUNCH OF SHIP.

IT must here be observed, that in answer to the first part of my proposition, Mr. CAMPBELL instanced the launch of a ship, as a WORK OF ART, beautifully poetical. My answer, *taking his own description*, was, that the ship so beautifully described by him was *more* indebted to nature than art. It was indebted to nature for the *winds*, that filled the sails; for the sunshine, that touched them with light; for the waves, on which it so triumphantly rode; for the associated ideas of the distant regions of the earth it was to visit, the tempests it was to encounter, and for being, as it were, endued with existence, "a thing of life."

I think what was said was an answer to Mr. CAMPBELL, and I think so still. What other arguments he might advance I know not. His ship, as described by himself, in my opinion totally

failed ; and I believe that the new-launched ship, even if it had *braved*, for a *thousand years*,

“The BATTLE and the BREEZE,”

must have surrendered on this account, because, by his *own description*, NATURE, NOT ART, gave it its *most essential poetical beauties*. (See the description itself, in the Letter to Mr. CAMPBELL, printed in this volume.)

Mr. CAMPBELL, however, has declined further contest ; whether because he would not, or because he thought he *could* not, is of no consequence. Your Lordship implies that he would not ; I am bold to say he could not ; and I am bolder to say, I think even your Lordship cannot.

The substance of your arguments, detached from the *jokes*, I conceive to be as follows.

The ship gives as much *beauty* to the *waters* as it receives from them. If the SUN were taken away, what then ? The ship, if I understand your Lordship, would not be seen. If Mr. BOWLES's pamphlet was not read by the light of the sun, it must be read by candle-light !!

2d. Thousands of people went to see the launch of the ship, who would not look upon the sea, particularly as it was *calm*, and *calm* water might be seen in the London Dock, Paddington Canal, a horse-pond, a slop-basin, or in any *other vessel*!

3d. The wind that filled the sails of the ship, might be heard through the chinks of a PIGSTY; and the sun might shine on a BRASS WARMING-PAN!

This, I conceive, my Lord, is the substance of your argument; which, if it had come from any one but yourself, I should have thought scarcely worth answering: as an argument, the bare statement almost confutes it. The least *fair discussion* will shatter it to rags, reduce it to the *blue bunting* of which the streamer of the ship is composed, and I had almost said, make it fit to be consigned to that “*other vessel*,” whatever it be, which has so *facetiously* entered your Lordship’s high poetical *imagination*. Allow me first to shew you what you have *not* done, before I examine what you have done, by way of argument.

You have not answered, nor attempted to answer, all the arguments which have been already brought forward on this occasion.

Mr. CAMPBELL, in his description of the ship, spoke not only of the effect of the sun, the seas, and the wind, but added other ideas; its visiting the remote parts of the earth, the tempests it might encounter, and described it, in his poetical vision, “a thing of life.”* I said, “the ideas of its visiting distant regions were ideas from nature, which conspire to make this sight *more interest-*

* There is no laboured chemical analysis in this, it is *obvious*.

“ing to the poet’s thoughts, and therefore more
“poetical.”

These you have not touched ; and I am sure, if you had, and could bring no arguments but from Paddington Canal, &c. my “fortress” would not have much to fear from your Lordship’s somewhat grotesque battery. Whatever motive Mr. CAMPBELL had for not defending his own Seventy-four, I think your Lorship, in argument at least, has not succeeded, however interesting your publication may be in other respects.

And now, my Lord, to point *our* guns, to open our fire, and endeavour to blow your PIG-STIES, “BRASS WARMING-PANS, and THAT OTHER VESSEL,” into shatters.

But, let me be fair ; let the reader compare what you advance with the substance I have given.

“ Mr. BOWLES asserts, that CAMPBELL’s “Ship of the line” derives all its poetry not from “*art*,” but from “*nature*.” “Take away the waves, the winds, the sun, &c. &c. *one* will become a stripe of blue bunting ; and the other a piece of coarse canvass on three tall poles.” Very true ; take away the “waves,” the “winds,” and there will be no ship at all, not only for poetical, but for any other purpose ; and take away “the sun,” and we must read Mr. BOWLES’s pamphlet by candle-light. But the “poetry” of the “Ship” does *not* depend on “the waves,” &c.: on the contrary, the “Ship of the Line” confers its own poetry upon the waters, and

heightens *theirs*. I do not deny that the “waves and “winds,” and above all “the sun,” are highly poetical; we know it to our cost, by the many descriptions of them in verse: but if the waves bore only the foam upon their bosoms, if the winds wafted only the sea-weed to the shore, if the sun shone neither upon pyramids, nor fleets, nor fortresses, would its beams be equally poetical? I think not: the poetry is at least reciprocal. Take away “the Ship of the Line” “swinging round” the “calm water,” and the calm water becomes a somewhat monotonous thing to look at, particularly if not transparently *clear*; witness the thousands who pass by without looking on it at all. What was it attracted the thousands to the launch? they might have seen the poetical “calm water” at Wapping, or in the “London Dock, or in the Paddington Canal, or in a horse-pond, or in a slop-basin, or in any other vase. They might have heard the poetical winds howling through the chinks of a pigsty, or the garret window; they might have seen the sun shining on a footman’s livery, or on a brass warming-pan; but could the “calm water,” or the “wind,” or the “sun,” make all or any of these “poetical?” I think not. Mr. BOWLES admits “the Ship” to be poetical, but only from those accessories: now if they *confer* poetry so as to make one thing poetical, they would make other things poetical; the more so, as Mr. BOWLES calls a “ship of the line” without them, that is to say, its “masts and sails and streamers,” “blue bunting,” and “coarse canvass,” and “fall poles.” So they are; and porcelain is clay, and man is dust, and flesh is grass, and yet the two latter at least are the subjects of much poesy.”

The commencement, my Lord, is ominous. Mr. BOWLES never said, nor is it consistent with the principles he has adopted to say, Mr. CAMPBELL's ship *derives* ALL its poetry from nature. If this misstatement, *in principio*, was intentional, I need not have appealed to you for my character of candour.

Mr. BOWLES said, and says, "that poetical beauty "in a ship *depends* not on art but nature."* ALL its poetry, he instantly admits, it does not derive from nature; but its poetical beauty *depends* upon nature; for the sails would not swell, the streamers would not flow, the motion would cease—its LIFE, which Mr. CAMPBELL speaks of, would be extinct.

But you say the poetry of the ship does not *depend* on the waves, &c. I think it does; for this reason,—that all this beauty, motion, and life, would be at once lost and extinct. True, nor can I for a moment think otherwise; thus seen, and thus associated, "the ship confers its own poetry upon the "waters, and heightens theirs," but NOT BEFORE the *elements of nature* have ENABLED IT TO DO so; and, therefore, its primary poetical beauty *depends* on nature, not art,

* The least attention may shew there is not here any contradiction. A ship on the stocks gives the idea of the power of the human mind, strength, &c. and then is adapted to poetry, as CRABBE has proved; therefore it does not derive *all* its poetry from nature, but for its *greatest* poetical beauty (and let Mr. CAMPBELL describe it) it *depends* on the accessories OF NATURE.

You say, take away the WINDS and waves, and there will be NO SHIP at all! And “take away the “sun, and you must read Mr. BOWLES’s pamphlet “by candle-light.” Read it how or when you will, the sun will be more poetical than a candle; and the seas, that “speak in the EAST and the WEST AT “ONCE,” will not depend on the ship for poetical sublimity, (but the ship will on them,) any more than the sun will *depend* upon Lord BYRON’s poetry. And then I ask you, my Lord, this question, (begging you to remember my principles only require that the works of nature, which are beautiful and sublime, are *more* poetical, *abstractedly*, than any works of art,)—whether the sun, the waves, and winds, are, *per se*, more poetical without the ship or the ship, *per se*, without the waves, &c. &c.? The poetry, therefore, is not reciprocal; for the ship can give no beauty till the elements of nature, on which its beauty depends, enable it to do so. Then it gives and receives. But, my Lord, you must remember, that when I answered Mr. CAMPBELL, (and I do not think either he or your Lordship can make my good ship surrender,) he made no distinction at all, but coloured his rich descriptions with all the hues of nature, and then advanced to shew the poetical beauties of ART.

But the water is *calm*, and its monotony requires to be broken; and this “*calmness*,” which is one feature of this mighty element, may be contem-

plated at Wapping, in the London Dock, Paddington Canal, a horse-pond, or any other vessel!

No: for though the water at Wapping, the London Dock, in the Paddington Canal, a HORSE-POND, or any OTHER vessel, be *calm*, it is *not poetical*. But your argument is this. "The sea is calm; the water in a horse-pond, or any other vessel, is calm; therefore the calm water in a horse-pond is as poetical as the sea!" No, my Lord: for the sea cannot be made unpoetical,* and your great powers cannot make the water in a *horse-pond*, or ANY OTHER VESSEL, poetical: and I will conclude with COWPER's description of the calm sea, whom, however, you call NO POET, and whom I think an original, pathetic, and great poet.

"OCEAN exhibits, fathomless and broad,

"Much of the *power* and *majesty* of God!

"He swathes about the swelling of the deep,

"That shines and rests, as infants smile and sleep.

"Vast as it is, it answers, as it flows,

"The breathings of the lightest air that blows.

"Curling and whitening over all the waste,

"The rising waves obey the increasing blast."

But we must stop before the storm comes on, for I wish only to shew how this "*monotonous*"

* Unless described as BLACKMORE has done it; and this distinction I beg to be remembered here. A bad poet may make the most sublime image contemptible; but a good poet cannot make a contemptible image, as a mouse-trap, for instance, sublime.

object can, in its calmest state, and without a single ship, or any accompaniments, be rendered *poetical*.

In fact, it does not seem to me, that your Lordship makes distinction between the SEA in painting, and the SEA in poetry.

“The sun is poetical,” by your Lordship’s admission; and to *our cost*, you say, by the many descriptions of it in verse. But to follow your argument.

“If the waves bore only foam upon their bosoms; “if the winds wafted only sea-weed to the shore; “if the sun shone neither upon pyramids, nor “fleets, nor fortresses, would its beams be *equally* “poetical?” Answer:—

If the waves bore only foam upon their bosoms, the ocean would be equally sublime, far from every track of vessel, every intrusion of man.

The ocean, I affirm, wants not the accessories of any thing *human* to make it *SUBLIME*, and therefore poetical. It is poetical, though not equally *picturesque* or beautiful, with or without them. The ideas it excites of Almighty power are those of *sublimity*, the highest poetical sublimity, which proudly rejects any associations or accessories of human art, or of human kind, to make it more so. “*The deep uttereth his voice*,” is one of the most sublime of the many sublime passages relating to it in the scriptures. We have no occasion to make it *more* poetical to say, “there go the

“ships;” but the ship, moving beautiful to the sight, and seeming, as it were, a creature of the vast element, and made doubly interesting, as an object of beauty, by those accessories of nature, without which it is nothing; a ship so seen adds to the *picture of poetical* beauty, but *not* to the more awful ideas of SUBLIMITY, which are far *more poetical*. In sunshine, in calm, in tempest, by night, by day, in its *deepest solitudes*, it wants nothing of art to make it *sublime*, as speaking every where, “in the east and “in the west,” in the north and the south, with one everlasting voice, ‘Infinitude and Power.’ What can be more sublime than this verse of the Psalmist? “If I take the wings of the morning, “and dwell in the UTTERMOST PARTS OF THE SEA, “even there shall thy hand lead me.”

To return: “if the waves bore only foam upon “their bosoms;”—“if the winds wafted only seaweed to the shore;”—“if the sun had neither “pyramids, nor fleets, nor fortresses, to shine “upon;” if it shone upon none of the emmets of earth;* it would be equally a stupendous object, in the visible creation, *per se*, and equally SUBLIME; and it would be poetical, equally poetical, whether it shone on pyramids or *posts*, fortresses or “pigsties,” a “brass warming-pan, or a footman’s

* Suppose man not upon earth, might not God have placed there other intelligent beings, to whom the sun would be sublime?

“livery,” though neither pigsties, or posts, *could* be sublime or beautiful, with or without it.*

Pyramids, I repeat, are *most poetical* from associations; and fortresses also : but brass warming-pans are images of *in-door* nature, and footmen’s liveries are images of “*artificial*” life ; and to say, that, because the sun can make one object poetical, it must necessarily make ANOTHER so, is not an argument worthy of Lord BYRON.

But how much genuine poetry is condensed in one line, where a ship is spoken of,

“SAILING IN SUNSHINE, FAR AWAY !”

As for the sun on Mr. CAMPBELL’s ship, if the ship did not want the sun, to give it more poetical interest, why did Mr. CAMPBELL think it necessary to introduce the sun at all? “But the ship *gives*, “as well as it *receives* :” so seen, it gives beauty, animating beauty, to the *seas*, not to the sun. It gives back, indeed, and amply repays what it receives ; but does a brass warming-pan give back any poetical beauty?

* I suppose, in all these instances, an adequate describer. COWLEY says,

“Uprose the Sun - - - and Saul.”

The sun is not made little, but Saul is. If, in description, the sun is painted in conjunction with a pigsty, the littleness will fall on the pigsty, not on the sun. Therefore, though the idea of the sun, abstractedly, cannot be made mean, a description in which it is introduced may be made very mean by other circumstances.

which you say not.

work of art anyway

"The sun shines white upon the rocks!"

The sun shines white upon the warming-pan:

and so the sun shines on Dr. SYNTAX's wig; but try the effect,

"Pale on the lone tower falls the evening beam."

then [] → Pale on my grey wig falls the evening beam.

Therefore Mr. CAMPBELL introduced the sun needlessly, if it did not make the ship more poetical; but though the ship (being itself especially so adorned, as if it came and went NATURE's chief favourite and delight among the works of art) gives, as well as it receives, beauty; a footman's livery does not do so, my Lord, any more than an old wig, upon which the sun equally shines, as on the Hellespont, or the crest of Hector.

As to seas without a ship, or with a ship upon the STOCKS, I appeal to our friend CRABBE. I shall quote a description from a poem of his, as it bears on the point; and your Lordship does not, I believe, reckon him among those whom you are pleased to call "naturals." He shall give us the sea *without a ship*; and, what is more to the purpose, a ship ON THE STOCKS!

"The sea without a ship."

"With ceaseless motion comes and goes the tide,

"FLOWING it fills the channel VAST and WIDE;

"Then back to sea with strong majestic sweep

"IT ROLLS, in ebb, yet terrible and deep!"*

I need not point out to your Lordship the effect of the metre, and the imagery :

“ Then BACK to SEA with strong majestic sweep

“ IT ROLLS.”*

Next we have a little of ART.

“ Here samphire banks, and salt-wort bound the flood,

“ Here STAKES,” &c.

I will leave CRABBE a moment ; and as your Lordship seems to think, that the sea is *more poetical with ships* than without them, I will take a beautiful picture, which you may possibly recognize.

“ He that has sailed upon the dark-blue sea,

“ Has view’d at times, I ween, a full fair sight ;

“ When the fresh breeze is fair as breeze may be,

“ The white sail set, the gallant frigate tight ;

“ Masts, spires, and strand retiring to the right,

“ The glorious main expanding o’er the bow,

“ The convoy spread like wild swans in their flight,

“ The dullest sailer wearing bravely now,

“ So gaily curl the waves before each dashing prow.”

Childe Harold.

A vivid and delightful picture is here added,—the sea by this moving and beautiful spectacle is *made more picturesque*, and so far, *more poetical* ; but, it is *more sublime* in poetry without them.

* This is the returning tide up the channel, but “ *no ship* ” is in it : that is all I say. It is highly poetical, though near land, without ship accompaniments. Those who object to this instance, very consistently shut their eyes to what I said of the sublimity of ocean from scripture.

I fear your Lordship *with your ships* will have the preference ; but I would take another picture from DRYER. “ Now,” &c.

“ Glide the tall fleet into the widening main,

“ A floating forest : ev’ry sail unfurl’d

“ Swells to the wind”—&c.

.....
“ Meantime in pleasing course the pilot steers,

“ STEADY, with eye intent upon the steel,

“ STEADY before the winds the pilot steers,

“ While gaily o’er the waves the mountain prow

“ Dance, like a SHOAL of DOLPHINS, and begin

“ To streak with various paths the hoary deep.

“ Yet steady o’er the waves they steer, and now

“ The fluctuating WORLD of WATERS WIDE,

“ In BOUNDLESS MAGNITUDE, around them swell,

“ O’er whose imaginary brim, nor TOWNS,

“ Nor WOODS, nor mountain tops, nor ought appears,

“ But *Phæbus orb, refulgent lamp* of light,

“ MILLIONS OF LEAGUES ALOFT.”

Do you not think the latter part of this description more sublime, as here represented, and, therefore, of a higher order in poetry, with the boundless seas, and the sun’s sole orb, than it would be, if accompanied with the gondolas of Venice, or if the ships were entirely omitted, though not so BEAUTIFULLY picturesque ?

To shew some of the infinitude of this said SEA’s *poetical beauties without ships*, I will take another passage from CRABBE.

“ Turn to the watery world !—but who to thee

“ (A wonder yet unview’d) shall paint *the Sea* ?

“ *Various and vast, sublime in all its forms,*

“ When lull’d by zephyrs, or when rous’d by storms,

" Its colours changing, when from clouds and sun,
 " Shades after shades upon the surface run ;
 " Embrown'd and horrid now, and now serene,
 " In limpid blue, and evanescent green ;
 " And oft the foggy banks on ocean lie,
 " Lift the far sail, and cheat the experienc'd eye.
 " Then the broad bosom of the ocean keeps
 " An equal motion, swelling as it sleeps ;
 " Then slowly sinking, curling to the strand,
 " Faint, lazy waves o'ercreep the ridgy sand,
 " Or tap the tarry boat with gentle blow,
 " And back return in silence, smooth and slow.
 " Ships in the calm seem anchor'd, for they glide
 " On the still sea, urg'd solely by the tide :
 " Art thou not present, this calm scene before,
 " Where all beside is pebbly length of shore,
 " And far as eye can reach, it can discern no more." }

This, to be sure, is not entirely an ocean view,
 without boats or ships; but can you, or CRABBE,
 make Paddington Canal as beautiful? And now,
 for the vessel on the stocks.

" Near these a crew amphibious in the docks
 " Rear, for the sea, those castles on the stocks :
 " See! the long keel, which soon the waves must hide;
 " See! the strong ribs which form the roomy side;
 " Bolts yielding slowly to the sturdiest stroke,
 " And planks which curve and crackle in the smoke;
 " Around the whole rise cloudy wreaths, and far
 " Bear the warm pungence of o'er-boiling tar."

Paint your ship on the stocks how you will,
 which of these pictures, the ships on the water,
 with accompaniments from nature, or the ship on
 the stocks, can be made most sublime or beautiful?

In fact, there is not a sight so awful, so sublime,
 or so terrible, as the ocean. And, therefore, in

its infinite shades and appearances, it exhibits in all,

“MUCH OF THE POWER and majesty of God.”

It is by itself more sublime, and therefore more highly poetical, than a ship with it or without it,—which is my proposition. But I need not go far for a more appropriate example, and therefore will set BYRON against BYRON.

I know nothing in poetry more beautifully picturesque than what has already been quoted from him,

“He that has sailed,” &c.

Now take another passage, if CRABBE’s passage be objected to as not having sufficient sea-room :
Look at the *sea* in its *sublimest* SOLITUDE.

“Thou glorious *mirror*, where the Almighty’s Form

“*Glasses* itself in tempests ; in all time

“Calm or convuls’d, in breeze, or gale, or storm,

“Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime

“Dark-heaving ; BOUNDLESS, ENDLESS, and SUBLIME,

“The IMAGE OF ETERNITY—the THRONE

“Of the INVISIBLE ; e’en from out thy slime

“The monsters of the deep are made ; each zone

“Obeys thee : thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone !”*

Now I will only ask, of these two pictures, each so finely painted, which of them would Lord BYRON call the most poetically SUBLIME ? what are all the ships in the world compared with one idea excited of power and eternity ? would a fleet

* See the whole of the magnificent description of the ocean, in *Childe Harold*, canto iv.

make the sea more sublime? No : the fleet would destroy its sublimity, which arises from the contemplation that it is boundless, endless, "the image "of eternity," "the throne of the Invisible ;" because it goes forth,

" Dread, fathomless, ALONE !"

Having placed these passages from the same poet, side by side, it will be admitted, I think, by every one of a commonly discriminating mind, that if one passage is the more picturesque and beautiful, the other is by far, for causes I have mentioned, the more, *per se*, sublime.

I cannot lay down the poem, without asking, further, of any poetical reader, whether this passage, from Lord BYRON, magnificent as it is, is not **DEGRADED** in the beginning? I would ask, if a reader of any poetical taste does not almost involuntarily turn from the heterogeneous and artificial imagery with which it is introduced, passing over the apparent profaneness of the allusions. The form of the **ALMIGHTY** seen in what? a "*glorious mirror*," and this mirror "*glassed !*" a metaphor obviously from artificial life, utterly beneath, and glaringly disgracing, the awful sublimity of the rest.

Having set BYRON against BYRON, the sublimest passage in *Childe Harold* against the most beautiful—respecting the Seas,—one word or two about

“ THE WIND.” “ The thousands that came to see the ship launched, the sails streaming in the wind, might have heard the wind through the *“chinks of a pigsty!”* HUDIBRAS observes,

“As pigs are said to SEE the WIND.”

Did this thought occur, when your Lordship associated the “wind” and the “pigsty” so ingeniously and sublimely? True; the thousands who were attracted to see “the launch” might have heard the “winds through a pigsty;” and they certainly did not go to *hear* the *wind*, or to see the sea, which, as you justly observe, “thousands pass, “without looking on it at all.” Is it less sublime for that? less adapted to poetry? Of all the thousands who saw the beautiful sight of this ship-launch, who among them saw it with the eye, and heart, and feelings of Mr. CAMPBELL? He has painted it, and in painting it, shewn the eye and heart of a poet; but the thousands who went to see the sight, would probably have gone to see KATTERFELTO perform some of his wonders,

“Wond’ring for his bread,”

as readily as the launch of this ship, so far as *poetical* interest excited them. But whether they came or staid at home, whether the ship was launched or not, the ocean was not less sublime, though *beauty* was added to the particular scene.

As to the *winds*, independent of their effect on the sails of a ship, they are often poetical or not, as

their sound is associated in the poet's fancy. When poor Tom sings,

"Hark! through the hawthorn blows the cold wind;"

Let us try the effect of a different association, according to your Lordship's ideas, and for the hawthorn add an image from "artificial life,"

"Hark! through the "pigsty" blows the cold wind."

Is the passage equally poetical? In fact, my proposition is proved, if I may say so, to the right and the left; and before some little "logic," your "pigsty," your "garret window," your "footman's livery," your "brass warming-pan," are all blown away to the *winds*.

Upon the whole, it will be found, I think, that these conclusions, from the foregoing reasons, will follow:

First, That ships, on the sea, derive the greatest part of their poetical beauty from nature; and the description of a genuine poet will prove this.

Second, That moral associations and sympathies have a great effect in creating a poetical interest, as the sun, seas, and winds, have added poetical beauty: for, with a ship in a storm, you sympathise with the *men*, not the boards.

Third, That, abstractedly, the sea is more poetically beautiful or sublime, than any ship, abstractedly.

Fourth, That, granting ships at sea make the picture more poetically beautiful, the sea, in the associated ideas of solitude and vastness, and Almighty Power, is

more adapted to poetical sublimity, without any ships, than with them.

Let me see fair extracts from my arguments, which no periodical journal has done, and let these *four points* be answered by any of my opponents, if they can.

My Lord, I think you must have produced such arguments without reflection; if you meant ME, in any part of that quotation, wherein you pleasantly apply the words,

“ Quoth he, there was a SHIP ;

“ Now let me go, thou GREY-HAIR'D LOON, ?

“ Or MY STAFF shall make thee SKIP : ”

trading
I answer, though my “ hairs, alas ! are grey,” your staff has not made me SKIP AN INCH. What, if I should almost begin to think, I might make even him who swam over the Hellespont “ skip ! ” But I fear, if I may be thought to have the least advantage, it is because your Lordship has not looked at the question on *all sides* ; or remembered the plain words of my proposition ; otherwise you would not have amused your admirers at my expense with such a hodge-podge of suns, winds, seas, Wapping, London Docks, Paddington Canals, pigsties, garret windows, horse-ponds, slop-basins, and OTHER VESSELS, “ footmen’s livery,” and “ brass warming-pans.”

I will now accompany your Lordship to the

*COAST OF ATTICA—TEMPLE OF
THESEUS, &c.*

“The beautiful but barren HYMETTUS, the
“whole coast of Attica, her HILLS, and mountains,
“Pentelicus, Anchesmus, Philopappus, &c. are in
“themselves poetical, and would be so, if the name
“of Athens, of Athenians, and HER VERY RUINS
“were swept from the earth.”—*Lord Byron.*

“But am I to be told, (you proceed) that the “nature”
of Attica would be *more* poetical without the ART of
the Acropolis? of the Temple of Theseus? of the still
all great and glorious monuments of exquisitely artificial
skill? Ask the traveller, which strikes him most as *poe-
tical*, the Parthenon, or the hill on which it stands? The
columns of Lake Colonna, or the lake itself; the rocks
at the foot of it, or the recollection that Falconer’s *ship*
was bulged upon them? There are a thousand rocks
and capes more picturesque than those of the Acropolis
and Cape Sunium in themselves; what are they to a
thousand scenes in the wilder parts of Greece, of Asia

Minor, Switzerland, or even Cintra in Portugal, or to many scenes of Italy, and the Sierras of Spain?

“ But it is the *art*, the columns, the temples, the *wrecked* vessel, which give them their antique and their modern poetry, and not the spots themselves; without them, the *spots* of *earth* would be unnoticed and unknown; buried, like Babylon and Nineveh, in indistinct confusion, without poetry, as without existence; but to whatever spot of earth these ruins were transported, if they were capable of transportation, like the Obelisk, and the Sphinx, and the Memnon’s Head, there they would still exist in the perfection of their beauty, and in the pride of their poetry.”

I here set before the reader the whole of this passage, because it is itself so beautiful. It is worthy Lord BYRON, and it is as forcible as it is eloquent, and picturesque as it is argumentative. I need not enter into an analysis to shew that I understand it, for I understand it in its full force; and though I have not seen these places but in Lord BYRON’s descriptions, and even remarking this splendid assemblage, I hope I am not so insensible (such a “natural”) as not to feel how poetical and affecting are those scattered columns, those temples, in those spots, where, *nescio quomodo movemur*, &c.; I can at least say, though I have not seen them, *animum pictura pascit inani*. I might add, *non obtusa adeo gestamus pectora*; and what I feel cannot better be described than in the vivid

painting of kindred scenes by a poet whom I have quoted.

“ Behold the pride of pomp,
 “ The throne of nations fall’n ; obscur’d in dust,
 “ E’en yet majestic : the solemn scene
 “ ELATES THE SOUL, while now the RISING SUN
 “ Flames on the ruins, in the purer AIR
 “ Tow’ring aloft, upon the glitt’ring plain,
 “ Like broken rocks, a vast circumference,
 “ Rent PALACES, crush’d COLUMNS, rifted moles,
 “ Fanes rolled on fanes, and tombs on buried tombs.
 “ Deep lies in dust the Theban Obelisk
 “ Immense along the waste ; *minuter art*,
 “ Gleconian forms, or Phidian, subtly fair
 “ O’erwhelming ; as the immense Leviathan,
 “ Outstretch’d, unwieldy, his island length uprears
 “ Above the foamy flood
 “ Grey mould’ring temples swell, and wide o’ercast
 “ The solitary landscape, hills, and woods,
 “ And boundless wilds, &c.”

Dyer’s Ruins of Rome.

With such thoughts, and affected by such images so distinctly set before us, where nature and art contend in what is most striking and affecting in the imagery of either, I admit that the “nature” of Attica would not be *more poetical* without the “art” of the Acropolis, or the Temple of Theseus, or the still great and glorious monuments of her exquisitely artificial genius. I admit this also ; but I deny, that, *abstractedly*, as works of art, these works are as sublime, or therefore as *poetical*, as the sublimest images from nature. Of the rocks on which they stand, I know nothing : in sublimity or beauty they may bear as little compa-

rison, as a piece of Pentelican marble, such as it is in nature, and Pentelican marble formed into an august temple or statue. No one can deny this : but if you take the *highest works* of art, with all their poetical associations, and compare them with the “spots” of earth, where Babylon and Nineveh are buried ; the spots, as spots, and the ruins, as ruins, cannot be compared ; but compare the most sublime of the objects of art, either abstractedly, that is, without any poetical associations, or with associations, and I deny the major part of your arguments *in toto* ; or that the sublimest works of art, be they where or what they may, are *more* sublime than the most sublime of the works of nature. And I again affirm, that what is sublime or beautiful, *per se*, in the works of nature, *comparatis comparandis*, is *more* sublime or beautiful than any works of art, and also in their associations, one leading the thought to GOD, and the other to man : and I answer, if you adduce the Temple of Theseus, give me the *Temple of the Universe*, *not made with hands*, and your temple will be as insignificant as the dust of the marble that composes it.

But, without going so far at present, I will ask your Lordship (and no one is a better judge), whom you think the most sublime of all poets, living or dead,—the most sublime, without exception ? Whom would POPE call so ? One of those mighty

spirits, which has given these poetical scenes, with their temples and columns, half their poetical interest. Shall I say HOMER? will you admit this?

Then I ask, if so, how comes it to pass, that the greatest poet the world has produced, wrote before the existence of any ARTS, at least in such perfection? Of rapidity and greatness of events, variety of character, wonderful invention, command of passions, and affecting incidents, we are not here speaking. And I must beg you, my Lord, to remember this, lest I might be told, that I assert that descriptions of external Nature are those which give the chief sublimity to the poems of HOMER.

Further, I say that all the illustrious images you have called up from the august remains of ancient art, are connected with *poetical passions*; and these passions are the emotions of *Nature*, from a thousand affecting connections: and I contend, setting aside the passions, that, in description of external Nature, and of the gods themselves, without being indebted to any temples or statues of them, HOMER stands, with the exception of MILTON, the sole and mightiest master of his art (of which external nature makes a great part) in the world. Let the temples of art, and the statues of gods, be as beautiful or sublime as they may, how came HOMER, in his descriptions, (not of what is *natural*, his Jack-Ass and Boar similies,) but in the

most beautiful and sublime objects in Nature,—the *Θηνα πολυφλοςβοιο θαλασσης*—the beautiful piece by moon-light,—the sublimity of Jupiter or Neptune,—to be the most poetical painter in the world? especially of the god whose statue has given immortality to the name of PHIDIAS? I need not inform your Lordship, that the Jupiter of HOMER was the original of the Jupiter of PHIDIAS.

What are all the gods of HOMER,* in the description of whom he has so wonderfully excelled, from the Supreme Deity to the Lord of the Ocean, and to the inferior deities of the sea or skies? what are these but personifications of some of the elements or appearances of nature? From Pluto, starting at the light, and crying out in his gloomy dominions, to Neptune in his car, wheeling so rapidly, that the axle is dry, from the struggling dusky dawn of morning to the

Ροδοδακτυλος ηως,

The first light touching, as it were, the extreme fingers of Aurora.† But we may have more to say of this hereafter. To follow the argument.

* The Arms, &c. will be considered, when we speak of the spear of Achilles.

† If in this animated picture the introduction of the car be adduced as a work of art, I ask which is more poetical, Neptune, the Tritons, the sounding Conch, &c. or the car?

Secondly, I would observe “of your richest assemblage of works of art,” as *more poetical* than the *spots* where they are, this may be true. But let us leave these “*spots*,” as they are called. Let us leave Greece, or even the wild Sierras of Spain, and pass to America. Mark the vast Mississippi or Missouri, pouring their ocean-like waters, from interior sources, through regions “dark with shades of eternal forests!” Hear the astounding fall and torrent-roar of the stupendous Niagara! Call up your PHIDIAS, let him form a god there! Call up him who placed Memnon’s Head in the desert, and left his name unknown for ever! Call up the builders of those temples and columns, the description of which gives your pictures such interest; will their works add to the magnificence of Nature, or make it *more poetical*, where the character of the scenery is already on the highest scale of magnificence? “*Manifestations of mind!*” What are the manifestations of the human mind in St. Peter’s, the Coliseum, the Pantheon, in the Venus, to the manifestations of the power and the majesty of the Godhead in all his works?

Thirdly, The “*ruins*,” you say, are as *poetical* in Piccadilly, as they are in the Parthenon. “Its rocks are *less so* without them.” Of that I have no doubt; but the rock is not the sublimest of rocks, though the ruins are the sublimest remains of the works of art; and this is scarcely, as I have

false assumption
that Nature can
be "poetical" apart
from "passions"

said, a fair way of stating the comparison : add, that the ruins themselves are more poetical from associations, than from their intrinsic sublimity ; they indeed stand “alone in the world,” as ROGERS, speaking of the “Torso,” has finely said. Besides, are not these ruins, independent of their being the highest specimens of human art, connected with a thousand associations, and all connected with the feelings of Nature ? I must have the most sublime and beautiful of objects to meet them in the visible creation ; and if these will not do, (but I think the sun and the seas quite sufficient,) I might rise, as I have remarked,

“From NATURE up to NATURE’S GOD !”

to the far more sublime, and therefore *more poetical*, ideas of ALMIGHTY power, and the IMMENSITY OF HIS WORKS, who “walketh upon the wings
“of the wind.”

“THESE ARE THY GLORIOUS WORKS, PARENT OF GOOD,

“ALMIGHTY, THINE THIS UNIVERSAL FRAME,

“THUS WONDROUS FAIR ; THYSELF HOW WONDROUS THEN !

“UNSPEAKABLE, WHO SITST ABOVE THESE HEAV’NS

“TO US INVISIBLE, OR DIMLY SEEN

“IN THESE THY LOWEST WORKS ; YET THESE DECLARE

“THY GOODNESS BEYOND THOUGHT, AND POWER DIVINE.”

MILTON.

VENICE, &c.

"I Have followed you with delight, my Lord, over the course you have taken since we left the pigsties; but I have to offer some reflections that prevent my coming to your conclusions.

We are now at the gay and glittering Venice.

"And the CHILDE stood upon the BRIDGE OF SIGHS;"

Lord BYRON asks, "Does its poetical beauty depend upon the sea and canals?"—Answer. Take the sea away, let it be of what colour it may, and even Venice would be less poetical. But why canals? These are *dug* by labour. Take away the sea, and will not Venice, in its aspect, be *less* poetical? "Is it the canal which makes it *poetical*?" Certainly not. For I can conceive nothing in the visible world, notwithstanding its water, so unpoetical as an artificial canal; to add to its interest, creeping, in a straight line, between a row of houses, with a palace on one side, and a prison on the other. The CANAL, or the Bridge

of Sighs! Oh! the Bridge of Sighs against all the world. The very name is poetical, and that of *canal* is quite the contrary. A bridge alone is beautiful and picturesque, and so far poetical; but the clearness of the water, the moving objects, the verdure, or trees, or, if you please, the *boats* near it, and, perhaps, a solitary fisherman, make it *more poetical*; especially if, like London Bridge, it were an appendage to a great commercial city, and if the flags and ships from all parts of the globe entered the moral associations connected with it.

I never saw Venice but in a "*picture*," though I assure you I have seen the sea.

But the "Canal Grande" gives me only the idea of that *least* poetical of American rivers, called by the romantic name of the "Big Muddy."

At Venice, your Lordship is apparently at home; and I have never seen that singular and beautiful city, except as it appears in the paintings of CANA-LETTI. There, I think, nothing ever appeared so unpicturesque and unpoetical. How little do these paintings resemble in beauty the works of CLAUDE, where the admixture of buildings, trees, cattle, &c. is so *poetical*! It must also be remembered, in the peculiar situation of this unique city, every thing appears on the side of ART, and scarce any thing on the side of NATURE; one is exalted, and the other depressed. The sea, instead of rolling and rocking in splendour, becomes a great ditch,

divided into other ditches, and the eye is, *per force*, carried away from the insipidities of nature *in this* spot to the decorations of ART; and if art ever obtained a transient triumph over NATURE, on the side of the sea, it must have been in this corner of the Adriatic.

If I had seen it, I might paint its gondolas, sparkling in the sun, as they pass and repass each other; the oar, dipped in unison to the distant song, that rose over the waves; the sea, kissing, as in homage, the feet of his mistress, and putting off, as in humility, all his richest and proudest attire of beauty.

But I could not paint it as Lord BYRON has done; and something ought to be allowed to his glowing and partial pencil.

Having requested the reader to bear in mind these material observations, I confess, if Lord BYRON's picture be faithful, as far as we might judge from this *particular spot*, and under these particular circumstances, ART might have a transient triumph. Lord BYRON, however, must be heard.

“There can be nothing more poetical in its aspect than the city of Venice: does this depend upon the sea, or the canals?”

“The dirt and sea-weed whence proud Venice rose?”

Is it the canal which runs between the palace and the prison, or the ‘Bridge of Sighs,’ which connects them,

that render it poetical? Is it the 'Canal Grande,' or the Rialto which arches it, the churches which tower over it, the palaces which line, and the gondolas which glide over, the waters, that render the city more poetical than Rome itself? Mr. BOWLES will say, perhaps, that the Rialto is but marble, the palaces and churches only stone, and the gondolas a 'coarse' black cloth, thrown over some planks of carved wood, with a shining bit of fantastically formed iron at the prow, '*without*' the water. And I tell him, that without these the water would be nothing but a clay-coloured ditch; and whoever says the contrary, deserves to be at the bottom of that, where POPE's heroes are embraced by the mud nymphs. There would be nothing to make the canal of Venice more poetical than that of Paddington, were it not for the artificial adjuncts above-mentioned; although it is a perfectly natural canal, formed by the sea, and the innumerable islands which constitute the site of this extraordinary city.

But if this be so in one particular spot, and under peculiar circumstances of depression on one side, and exaltation, and a colouring, perhaps, somewhat partial, on the other, the general principle is not affected, that "what is sublime or beautiful in works of nature, is more *poetical* than "any works of art!" It might *not* be so in a particular angle of Europe, in that particular spot, compared with those particular features; but the general principle will not be affected; and I have doubts whether Venice, brilliant as she is,

might not look small by the side of the blue and billowy Pacific. I therefore hold it not certain, that Lord BYRON has gained a triumph for the cause he espouses, even at this his favourite and unique city; but I contend, if it be so *there*, the general principle is not altered. The embrace of the Mud Nymphs, therefore, for the present, I think I may decline, with your Lordship's permission; and I was almost about to add, concerning this embrace, "DETUR DIGNIORI!"

CITY OF ROME, &c.

But from the gay and glittering Queen of the Adriatic, where do your Lordship's eccentric wanderings take us now?

To Rome, and the Cloaca at Rome! The city of Rome, with its scattered remains of ancient grandeur,

“ Fall'n columns, broken arches, spread.”

“ Spirat adhuc Imperiosa minas.”

But, if cities are considered *poetically*, it must be for their picturesque, and so far “ poetical,” beauty, like Venice and Constantinople. Seen at a distance, when their appearance harmonizes with the sky, they are most interesting and poetical: the ART of the buildings is lost sight of; and a thousand circumstances of light and shade, glittering towers or cupolas, have an effect of making us entirely overlook the work of art, whilst their most picturesque features blend with the distance into the beauties of NATURE. But the distinction ought always to be kept in mind, of what is most sublime or beautiful in Nature being compared with what is sublime in art; and you, my Lord, without regard to this obvious distinction, take your city, and without discrimination of what is

most picturesque or poetical even in a city, demand, "what are the seven hills without the city?" As you make no discrimination, I will: a distant city is much more poetical than one close in sight; the intermixture of water or trees, as in CLAUDE's landscapes, takes off and subdues the glare of *nearer art*. The different points of elevation that catch the light; smoke here and there, perhaps, ascending slowly into the cloudless sky; these, and sundry other accidental adjuncts, make a distant city harmonize, as I have said, with the colours and beauties of NATURE in the surrounding scenery: place your city so near as to lose the effect of all these circumstances, your city will not be "so picturesque" to the eye, or so poetical to the imagination.

It is on this account, the line I quoted in the Letter to CAMPBELL has so poetical an effect,

"Fumum, et opes, strepitumque Romæ."

What an idea does the "*smoke and the noise*" give of the magnitude and multitude of a vast metropolis; but if the view had been *more distinct*, had all the buildings, as buildings, been brought nearer, the poetry of the city would be lost at once.

The very sounds of a great city, in like manner, become poetical, when blended into an indistinct murmur,

"And the busy *hum* of men."

MILTON.

"For cities humming with a restless noise."

"*Confusæ sonus urbis et illætabile murmur.*" VIRGIL.

If you come nearer, you may hear

..... "The stir

"Of the GREAT Babel, and the noise she makes,

"Through all her gates."

If you go nearer yet, you may enter with CRABBE into the alleys or lanes; the picture may be drawn with a faithful hand, and every thing set before us as it is: but the BEAUTY or SUBLIMITY in poetry is lost, and you of necessity approach to what is doubtless no less difficult to *execute*, the confines of the familiar. And so much in general of cities as poetical objects.

But Lord BYRON brings us from Venice, not only to the magnificent ruins, but the very Cloaca of Rome. Even here I shall follow you. Who will think "this work of labour as poetical as Richmond Hill, I know not:" that it may be made poetical, we have the authority of DYER:

"Such the sewers large,

"Whether the great Tarquinean Genius dooms

"Each wave impure; and proud with *added rains*,

"*Hark!* how the MIGHTY *billows* LASH their vaults,

"And thunder; how they heave their rocks in vain!

"Though now incessant time has roll'd around

"A THOUSAND WINTERS o'er the CHANGEFUL world,

"And yet a thousand since, the indignant floods

"ROAR LOUD in their firm bounds, and dash and swell

"In vain."

I need not point out where the *poetry* lies; and the reader will observe, there is as little about *art*, even in this description, as there was in CAMPBELL's ship.

B's attack depends on a confusion of "poetical" as
t-poetic-subject and a beautiful-in-itself - here at least

APOLLO, GLADIATOR,

HERCULES, &c.

Which way shall we now turn ; for lo ! not the
hog's tail in a high wind, but all your gods and
goddesses, Apollo, Hercules, &c. brought against
me and poor Nature!

What an assemblage ! We almost shrink at the
entrance. "The Coliseum, the Pantheon, the
"Apollo, the Laocoon, the Venus de Medicis,
"the Hercules, the GLADIATOR," (I shall omit
MOSES,) and all the HIGHER works of CANOVA,
(why *higher works*, as HERCULES' club, if it
were equal in EXECUTION, do I understand your
Lordship, would be as fine a piece of art as HER-
CULES ;) but these great works of MAN are as
poetical as Mount Etna, and still more so as
"DIRECT MANIFESTATIONS OF MIND," &c.

I do not think so, but whether they are or are
not as *poetical* as Mount Etna, &c. I can bring
"*manifestations of mind*" against them, *manifestations*
of the ALMIGHTY MIND, as I have before

said. Why, if JUPITER himself was in your Pantheon, he would fall instantly before the thunder and lightning of the JUPITER in VIRGIL,

“Ipse Pater, MEDIA NIMBORUM in NOCTE, CORUSCA

“Fulmina molitur dextra :” &c.

Why is this JUPITER, as poetry, superior to any marble JUPITER in the world? because no marble can imitate that which forms *the most* sublime and poetical part of the picture,

“MEDIA NIMBORUM in NOCTE.”

As we are playing at “Bowls,” my Lord, I think I can overset your marble gods; for if I bowl down one, all the rest, upon the same principle, will fall about us, like ninepins. I will call in no *supernatural* assistance,

“Nec deus intersit nisi dignus vindice nodus.”

I will take the Dying Gladiator, though it seems rather ungenerous to attack any one after he is *down*. But as this is the most consummate specimen of ART, I shall examine your exquisite delineation in poetry of the same statue.

I have done this in my vindication against the Quarterly. I must examine your copy again, and more minutely.

Here, my Lord, follows your copy, but we must remember we are not speaking of the *statue* of the Gladiator merely as a work of art, but enquiring which is the *most* poetical, the statue itself, or your copy?

" I see before me the Gladiator lie :
 " He leans upon his hand his manly brow ;
 " Consents to death, but conquers agony,
 " And his droop'd head sinks gradually low :
 " And from his side *the last drops, ebbing slow,*
 " *From the sad gash, fall heavy, one by one,*
 " *Like the first drops of a thunder shower ; and now*
 " *The arena swims around him.—He is gone,*
 " *Ere ceas'd the inhuman sound which kill'd the wretch who won,*
 " *He heard it, but he heeded not. His eyes*
 " *Were with his heart, and that was far away :*
 " *He reck'd not of the life he lost, nor prize ;*
 " *But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,*
 " *There were his young barbarians all at play,*
 " *There was their Dacian mother. He, their sire,*
 " *Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday !*
 " *All this ruhs'd with his blood. Shall he expire,*
 " And unaveng'd ? Arise, ye Goths, and glut your ire ! "

Let us examine these lines by the statue before us. I look at the marble; I see you have faithfully exhibited the " Dying Gladiator : "

" He leans upon his hand his manly brow,
 " Consents to death, but conquers agony."

A fine idea, which the statue excites in the beholder, and which you have so powerfully expressed ! I see also, in your exquisite copy, that the

" Droop'd head sinks *gradually* low."

Following the idea excited, it may be so represented in poetry. The *sad drops* in the " statue " may seem to FALL HEAVY, ONE BY ONE, and thus you may describe the act of falling heavy, ONE BY ONE; but when you add, like the *first drops of a thunder-storm*, you leave the statue as a work, and take the

finest part of your *poetical* representation FROM NATURE. Thus you make it instantly *more* poetical, or else you need not have brought in this beautiful comparison, which is as remote *from art*, as *thunder* is from a marble man.

You have made the marble drop blood, with drops that fall *heavy*, and in doing so, you paint from nature, not the statue. But what are the most affecting images? Following nature, you make the marble think, as well as drop blood. We instantly feel his increase of agony, as the dying Gladiator in his last hour thinks on his distant home, the banks of the Danube, his children at play; their Dacian mother, and himself, “butchered “to make a Roman holiday!” From whence are all these affecting images? FROM NATURE; these tender recollections? from NATURE; and why introduced? to make the statue *more poetical*.

If you say the dumb marble excited all these affecting images in the mind of you, gazing on it with the feelings of a poet, from whence are these pictures and images taken? Who does not answer, from NATURE?

I shall now leave your Deities, and Statues, &c.; for if what is here said be true in *one* example, it must be so in all.*

* The reader may compare with the statue of the Laocoon, the description in VIRGIL.

The same results will follow, and for the same reason; because “images taken from what is *SUBLIME* or beautiful in nature,” are *more* beautiful and sublime, and therefore *more poetical*, “than any images drawn purely *from art*.” “*Quod erat demonstrandum* ;” and, let me add, my Lord, “*ex ore tuo*,” from your own poetry, opposed to your *own criticisms*.

I think it best to divide the subject, for more clearness, into two parts; and I cannot better end this part than with the battle against your principal deities ;—and I remain, my Lord,

&c. &c. &c.

"The same results will follow, and for the same reasons, because 'images taken from what is ugly' are in beautiful in nature," are more beautiful and sublime, and therefore more useful, "than any images drawn from the ugly." "And yet," "I am not," and, for the sake, my Lord, "as you say," from your own poetry, opposed to your own criticism.

I think it best to divide the subject for more classical, into two parts; and I cannot better call this part than with the title, *Against your principle of taste*;—and I remain, my Lord,

Bel. &c.

LETTER II.

Mrs. UNWIN's NEEDLE.

MY LORD,

THE transition from all the Gods of Art to this humble instrument is rather abrupt ; but it is important, although you have included it *in the note*, because we now leave mere works of art for passions ; and Mrs. UNWIN's needle alone, in my opinion, is as much superior to all your Gods, *poetically* considered, as it is to COWPER's "*sylvan sampler*."

The affecting beauty of this image does not depend in the least upon being a needle, *quoad* needle, but upon being *that* needle, which, like the horn-box of STERNE, sets all the interesting circumstances connected with the sacred remembrance of the dead, and the bereaved friend, before us.

Does your Lordship think a spoon, *per se*, poetical ? Probably not. Yet when the companions of the brave and unfortunate Cook, so long sepa-

i. e. Some poetical themselves by a spoon

rated from their country, and in the wildest regions, thousands of leagues from their native land, accidentally saw a spoon, with the name of London on it; their distant country, and their tenderest connections, from whom they had been separated so long, and whom they might never see again, were more strongly recalled to their recollection; and this spoon, like Mrs. UNWIN's needle, thus becomes *poetical*, not because it is a spoon, but because, under the peculiar circumstances with which it is presented to the imagination, it wakes the tenderest and most affectionate feelings of our NATURE.

But we had better be a little more particular concerning this one circumstance. Mrs. UNWIN's *needle* is, indeed, submitted to my judgment, with a kind of especial emphasis. "I submit to Mr. BOWLES's own judgment a passage from another poem of COWPER's, to be compared with the same writer's '*sylvan sampler*.'" I will let the "*sylvan sampler*" alone at present; it shall be all "*twaddle*;" but the comparison is not fair. You take pure description, and compare it with poetry that affects the heart and passions. I say a tree, *any tree*, is, *per se*, *quoad tree*, more *poetical* than any *needle*, *quoad needle*, or *quoad needle* and "*stockings*," which is your Lordship's association.

attended
 "I submit to Mr. BOWLES's own judgment!" A subject so respectfully submitted requires deliberation; and after deliberation, "I submit" the

following observations to Lord BYRON's *own* judgment! But first referring me to the stanza, he asks, if these *three* lines are not worth all the "boasted twaddling" about trees, so triumphantly re-quoted. I answer, Yes, yes, yes; worth *ten thousand* trees, merely as trees, visible trees, connected with no passions of the heart. But, after shewing that you feel the affecting beauty of the *needles* as much as I do, you add, "a homely collection of "images and ideas, associated with the *darning* "of *stockings*, the *hemming* of *shirts*, and *mending* of *breeches*; and will any one deny they "are eminently poetical, and beautiful, and pathetic, as addressed by COWPER to his nurse?" No, my Lord: no one will deny, and I *the last*, I hope, that they are eminently poetical and beautiful. But what I marvel at is this, that this image should be so touching and affecting to your Lordship, with your associations, *darning* of *stockings*! *hemming* of *shirts*! and *mending* of *breeches*! Why, I could not extract the passage without *laughing* to myself, though I never read the stanzas of poor COWPER without tears in my eyes. I do marvel, that with these associations in your Lordship's mind, of *shirt*, *stockings*, and BREECHES! the image should seem affecting to your Lordship at all. In my mind, it is poetically associated neither with one, nor all, nor any, of these auxiliaries that art has brought in *versus nature*: the thought

of one or the other never entered into my head. The needles were associated in my ideas with the loss of a beloved companion, never to be seen more upon earth, and COWPER's solitary and desolate heart, when he beheld the humblest relic of her domestic cares.

These thoughts, my Lord, give the needles interest; and affecting as the lines have ever been, and will be, to all lovers of poetry and NATURE, I do not think it worth while to take notice of SHERIDAN's pleasant story of "the *poulterer*."

Let us see the effect of your Lordship's interesting and affecting associations with Mrs. UNWIN's needles. COWPER's lines are,

"Thy NEEDLES, once a shining store,

"For my sake restless, heretofore,

"Now rust disus'd, and shine no more,

"My MARY."

Suppose it were written more closely, according to the associations which have such an effect upon your Lordship's sensibility, it would run, perhaps, in this manner:

"My STOCKINGS, oh! DEPARTED FRIEND,

"My SHIRT, that I so OFT DID REND,

"My BREECHES, thou no more shalt mend!

"My MARY."

The "*true critic*" will not fail to remark how much pathos and poetry is added to the "shirt," as making it at the same time more characteristic of a *poetical* wearer, by being "rent."

To return. After your Lordship's triumphant sally against nature, armed with Mrs. UNWIN's needle in one hand, and COWPER's "stockings" and "*breeches*" in the other, you seem scarce able to restrain your expressions of triumph, for thus, my Lord, flows the tenor of your exulting prose:

"One more *poetical instance* of the POWER of ART, and even its superiority, over NATURE, in *poetry*, and I HAVE done."

And now behold

THE BUST OF ANTINOUS.

“The bust of ANTINOUS,” in your Lordship’s animated language, is “*not natural, but super-natural, or rather super-artificial!*” As a work of ART, of *statuary*, this head I conceive to be, if I may judge from rude copies, most perfect. But poetry and statuary are two things, as poetry and painting are ; and therefore, though nothing in the whole world of art may exceed this head in marble, I would only beg your Lordship to endeavour to describe it in poetry. With such enthusiasm, if you cannot describe it, I know no one who can. When you have put it into verse, I will examine it, and see how far your Lordship will, *per force*, be obliged to have recourse to *her*, by whose aid your poetry shines, as much as your criticism ungratefully decries her. You say, “the poetry in this bust is in no respect derived from nature! It must be difficult to say what the poetry of the bust is derived from, for it is *not natural, but supernatural, or rather SUPER-ARTIFICIAL!*”—Byron.

As I am not one of the initiated in these mysteries, but only pretend to be a man of common sense, this is all to me, I confess, as mystic as “Muggle-tonian” dreams, or rather, might I venture to say, like “*super-artificial twaddle!*”

“*Is there any thing in nature like this bust, except the Venus?*” — That is, is there any thing in *nature* like this bust, except the Venus, which is NOT in nature? Do I understand it? Let the reader try.

“Is there any thing in nature like this marble, except the VENUS? Can there be more poetry gathered into existence than in that wonderful creation of perfect beauty; but the poetry of this bust is in no degree derived from nature. The execution is *not* natural, it is *super-natural*, and “*super-artificial*.” I know that every thing in ART must be ideal nature, possible nature, beyond common, existing, every-day NATURE; yes, and the great prototype of the most beautiful “*super-natural*,” “*super-artificial*” art, must be NATURE. The most perfect bust must have eyes, lips, forehead, hair, nose, &c. &c. “Aye: but nature never produced any thing so perfect as this bust, in this respect!” — It is of no great consequence, in my opinion, whether this be literally true or not. But your Lordship is a little hard upon nature. You are yet a young man, and in the course of your travels have seen a lady of rank, and I, though not

such an *elegans formarum spectator* as your Lordship, who have also had the pleasure of being *once* in the company of the lady you compare with the statue of Venus, admit all you say. You, then, my Lord, in a space of life, compared with the time that has passed since man was first created, but as a wink,—you have seen a BRITISH LADY, and an ALBANIAN GIRL, nearly, if not quite, as perfect, with respect to form, features, countenance, &c. as THE VENUS; yet, in your *circumscription of the powers of nature*, you tell us “nature never produced a living face like this, or the bust of Antinous.” How do you know? But I do not care whether nature has or has not. Poetry has; and I will take MILTON’s Adam and Eve, as perfect in form, in “*supernatural*, or in *super-artificial*” beauty, as the bust of Antinous, or the statue of Venus!

When I reflect on the ardour of your language, granting this bust to be that of woman, and made complete as a whole “*supernatural*, *super-artificial*” “*female*,” there might almost be a fear that your Lordship’s love would resemble at last that of Pigmalion; but there would be no danger, for the moment your “*supernatural*, *super-artificial*” beauty was *alive*, your “*super-artificial*” transport would be over! The whole of what you say on this point appears so strange to a man of plain understanding, that I think I must have

misconceived your meaning. If I have done so, I shall be sorry; if I do understand it, I have no hesitation to use your own words, “away with such *cant!*” such “*supernatural* and *super-artificial* *twaddle!*” I here put aside this bust, as I have already made an attack upon your full assemblage of marble gods, the mighty machinery of your criticism.

I have said that statuary and poetry are two things. Statuary, as an *art*, is indebted to nature for only one thing, with which, indeed, she performs *her wonders*; turning a rude block into such a creature, *sui generis*, as now adorns the dining-room of Lansdown House, so beautiful, so perfectly beautiful, that I, Goth as I may seem to your Lordship, when I have the honour of being admitted as a guest, have sometimes forgot my soup to gaze. Art, then, is indebted to nature for nothing but the block; but for what is the statuary indebted to nature? for *all his ideas*. For though he might have been less fortunate than your Lordship, who have *accidentally* met in your travels so near a resemblance to Venus, as the Albanian girl, yet he could have had no *ideas at all* of beauty, except from nature; for if there had not been a beautiful human figure, and “*thinking things*,” my Lord, like you and me, upon earth, had *other forms*, neither of us could have had the least idea of that beauty, the conception of which

is first required in the sculptor. But let the art and artist have done all they can, they cannot render their image as perfect as poetry can; for she can give to the statue life, animation, tears, smiles, language, eyes that shine, &c.; and for these ideas poetry is indebted to NATURE.

The bust of Antinous, which seems even superior to all your other vanquished gods, to Mrs. UNWIN's needles themselves, I fear, also, must fall, like "FRIAR BACON'S HEAD!"

But as you have joined with this bust the "Poulterer's shop," and COWPER's "sylvan sampler" of *trees*, by way of saving time, I shall here say a word or two of poetical trees. Your Lordship does not seem to admire "trees." However, let us only remark that even Constantinople would be less poetical without them, and by putting them here together, the city and trees, I think I shall be able, not only to save time, but to "*kill two birds with one stone.*"

PORT OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

I have no doubt, from what I have read, the view you speak of is unique in picturesque and poetical beauty. But, my Lord, are there indeed no trees among the buildings? No golden cupolas shining to the morn? Much as your Lordship dislikes “sylvan samplers,” are there no beautiful palms, sleeping, as it were, in the sunshine, like an Albanian girl? No dark cypresses breaking the white buildings? As to the sylvan part of the landscape, I shall ask permission to quote a line of my own.

..... “Sees
“Damascus’ golden fanes, and minarets, and TREES.”

I put the “*trees*” into the picture, my Lord, not for the sake of rhyme, which sometimes more sublime poets do; (and your Lordship well knows that rhyme

“The rudder is of verses,
“By which, like ships, they steer their courses:”

HUDIBRAS :)

but I assure you I put in these "odious trees," not for the sake of the rhyme, but to break the monotony of buildings, and to make them more poetical. I doubt how *poetical* even Constantinople would look without them; and to shew this, though not a *grand voyageur*, yet having seen the sea, not "only in a picture," but also in reality, I must take you from Constantinople, and the Hellespont, to that part of the sea with which I am most familiar, Southampton Water. The banks are hung almost entirely with wood, as far as the eye can reach.

"And forests sweep the margin of the main."

Now suppose the whole line was houses, would it be so poetical? I THINK NOT!

"And chimnies sweep the margin of the main."

If you say, the buildings, interspersed, add to the poetical effect of the *trees*, as well as the trees to them, I answer, "Doubtless!" But the test is this: which would be most poetical on the sea-side—a beautiful building without trees, or trees without buildings? The bust, and the trees, have led me a little out of my way, for I intended to have connected "The Needle" with

*HOMER's SPEAR, WARRIORS, ARMS,
HELMETS, BOWS, &c.*

"The shield of *ACHILLES* derives its poetical interest from the subjects described on it."—*Bowles*.

'And from what does the *spear* of *ACHILLES* derive its interest? and the helmet and the mail worn by *PATROCLUS*; and the celestial armour, and the very 'brazen greaves, of the well-booted Greeks?'—*Byron*.

And now, if *Mrs. UNWIN's* needle and *stockings* will not much serve your Lordship, let us see what can be effected on your side as the champion of art *versus* *NATURE*, by the "spear" of *ACHILLES*.

But why did you take the *spear*, my Lord? What can the "spear" do, if the "shield" could do nothing? The helmet, of which you find *CAMPBELL* has made so poetical an use in *O'CONNOR's* Child, would have done better; but not to quail under the *SPEAR* of *ACHILLES*, even in the hands of Lord *BYRON*, I ask you, first, if the spear be poetical, is it *more poetical* than the warrior who uses it? The shield in *HOMER*, and the pastoral cup in *THEOCRITUS*, are described at large. These great

poets were obliged to have recourse to images from NATURE to *sustain* the poetical interest of a work of art. But describe distinctly a spear. It is long, it is short, or glittering, or, perhaps, *bloody*. Let us take the first arms that occur in HOMER, not of ACHILLES, but of a secondary warrior.*

Let us remark DIOMED, putting on his war-like habiliments. Now observe, for it is a matter of mere observation, how HOMER, by images drawn FROM NATURE, in connection with ideas of terror or sublimity, makes us forget the work of art, and rouses the attention; these are some of the animating adjuncts that make the picture MORE poetical.

The first thing that presents itself is the *helmet*.

“High on his helm CELESTIAL LIGHTNINGS PLAY!

“His beamy shield emits a living ray;”—

“Like the RED STAR that FIRES TH’ AUTUMNAL SKIES,

“WHEN FRESH HE REARS HIS RADIANT ORB TO SIGHT,

“AND BATH’D IN OCEAN, SHOOTS A KEENER LIGHT.”

Pope’s Homer.

I have extracted these remarks from a few observations, written long before your criticism; there are none of your examples, my Lord, which I have not before attentively considered; and I must think, you have not so attentively considered them as myself.

* I have spoken at large on this subject in the last vindication, where I mentioned the images from art introduced in the *Paradise Lost*. ACHILLES’ spear is an ash from Mount Pelion, Satan’s spear was like a mast “hewn in Norwegian forests.”

I hope this will be sufficient to shew, that I do not wish ULYSSES to use, as in the *travestie*, his “mutton-fist” instead of his bow.

But suppose you had brought against me HECTOR himself, κορυθαιολος HECTOR! Examine the most interesting circumstance in the whole Iliad, particularly where THE HELMET becomes most interesting: Need I mention the parting between HECTOR and ANDROMACHE? Every heart has been smitten with the affecting incidents of the passage, since HOMER existed. The child is in the mother’s arms; and as HECTOR, going to battle, is about to kiss it, the child is frightened at the plumes, and turns his head into his mother’s bosom: HECTOR takes his helmet off, and then kisses the child, who, εκλινθη·ιακων, whilst the mother smiles in her tears; and I ask, which does your Lordship think the *most poetical*, the affectionate father, the tearfully smiling mother, the child that shrinks, or THE HELMET! I know what you will say in your heart, if you are indeed “*magnanimous*” enough, whilst you will admit the truth of what I have said.

As I think I have taken your city of Venice, Constantinople, &c. “played at Bowls,” not, I hope, without success, among your marble gods, and even supported my case against you, whether armed with the glittering spear of ACHILLES, or brandishing Mrs. UNWIN’s needle, I consider the

battle nearly won. I shall dispatch some of the most material of the other arguments as shortly as I can.

Your Lordship brings the sublime image before us, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah."

I object to the dyed *garments* from Bozrah!! Had they been *specified* as a work of art, I should; but who thinks of the garments, when nothing is specified, and when the eye and mind are fixed on the terrible and advancing spectacle?

As to garments, now your Lordship has taken me to the scriptures, let me ask what is more sublime than this passage; "the battle of every warrior is with confused noise, and WITH GARMENTS ROLLED IN BLOOD!" You have also omitted, in the passage you have quoted, a circumstance which gives an indistinct glory even to the garments. "He that is GLORIOUS in his apparel, travelling in the GREATNESS of his strength."

I do not like to touch this awful and sublime passage, but must only desire your Lordship to consider what would be the effect of a garment from artificial life, a "*red coat*" for instance,

From the "dyed garments," which do not take off from the grandeur of the image in the least, because they are not *specified*, let us pass to the garments of CÆSAR, and the dagger that destroyed him, for we are now speaking of the works of ART in poetry.

I do not object, nor ever should object, nor is there any thing in the principles I have laid down which should make me object, to the “dagger,” or the “garment.” The dagger is connected with ideas of terror, and is, *per se*, in some degree poetical; but a “*knife*” is not; and therefore, though I do not object to the “dagger,” I object very much to the “*knife*,” when Lady MACBETH says,

“Pall me in the deepest shroud of night,
“That my keen *knife* sees not the wound it makes.”

I object as much to “blanket,” which renders the sublimest passage ludicrous.

“Nor heav’n *peep* through the blanket of the dark!”

This I object to; and I object somewhat, not to the “dagger,”* or the “*garment*,” which are introduced, but to “*peep* through;” and I object, for the same reason, to

“See what a *rent* the envious CASCA made.”

But so far from objecting to the garment, when ANTONY says,

“You all do know *this garment*.”

I think it *most affecting*; and how much more affecting is it rendered by the magic touch of SHAKESPEARE, when, in continuation, ANTONY

* The poetry of the “dagger” depends entirely upon its associating images. The dagger in Macbeth is sublime; in the ballad on St. George it is ludicrous; because,

“When it had kill’d a *Cheshire man*,
“’T would *toast* a CHESHIRE cheese.”

(how could you, a poet, omit these exquisite lines?) brings to the recollection of CÆSAR's friends a particular and beautiful circumstance from nature; whilst the orator *affects* their *hearts* by the *distinct* image of the summer evening, and the very tent, connected with ideas of CÆSAR's victories.

"You all do know this mantle! I remember

"The FIRST TIME CÆSAR ever put it on:

"'Twas on a SUMMER'S EVENING, in his TENT,

"THE DAY he OVERCAME the NERVII!"

Any thing more beautiful as poetry, or more effective as oratory, designed to rouse the feelings, cannot be imagined.

Thus you see, my Lord, I can turn SHAKESPEARE against you, as well as MILTON against CAMPBELL, and gain strength from your own quotations. Who that feels the circumstances I have mentioned thinks of the *garment* of CÆSAR merely as a garment? It is the poetical sentiment that fills the mind, and the poetical imagery from NATURE. But the case had been different, if the garment had been from *artificial* life, or too distinctly brought in sight.

I will illustrate this by a trifling circumstance. You recollect the passage,

"Life is a walking shadow, &c.

"Out, out, BRIEF CANDLE."

Shakespeare.

The passage is quoted in an edition of the Tatler, as follows :

"Life is a walking shadow ; a poor player,

"That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,

"And then is heard no more.

"Out, out, *short candle* !"

Now every one feels this absurdity ; and yet *brief* is short, and short is *brief*. Why has it so ludicrous an effect ? Because, when the word "*brief*" is used, the mind is fixed *only upon the sentiment* ; when "*short*" is used, it is fixed only on the CANDLE !

If these observations are just, and I believe they will generally be found so, nothing more need be said of daggers, arms, shields, spears, &c. ; or the bow of ULYSSES.

The human *hand* may be poetical or not, as it is described. But a *fist* doubled up as in the act of committing *an assault*, complaint of which comes before a country justice, is not poetical ; and I am afraid, my Lord, all you have said of "*fists*," and "*fighting*," and "*gouging*," must go for *nothing*.

"It grieves me much, replied the Clerk again,

"Who speaks so well should ever speak in vain !"

I cannot put aside the bow of ULYSSES without one more remark. I have spoken before of the affecting circumstance of PENELOPE weeping over the bow of her long-lost husband. Do you think that the effect would have been the same, if she had wept over his *wig*, provided he ever wore one ?

Mrs. UNWIN's "needles" were dangerous, and would have failed in any hands but COWPER's; and him you pronounce "no poet!" This is an *αυτος εφη*, which I could not have expected. He failed in HOMER completely; but your assertion can only be met by another. He was a great, a sublime, an affecting, and, what is more, a truly ethical and religious poet, my Lord. But he lessened the effect of passages of the utmost sublimity of thought and language, by transitions to the familiar and to the artificial. Who can bear,

"Who loves a HOT-HOUSE, loves a GREEN-HOUSE too?"

and the reason of our dislike is, because hot-houses and green-houses are not so poetical as "green fields." And when you describe me as having "*a heart of gall*" for endeavouring to appreciate ("not *depreciate*") POPE, as a poet and a man, consider, my Lord, whether he be quite consistent, who talks of poetry without feeling COWPER's; who talks of ethics, without venerating him; and who severely judges him as guilty of a crime, the effect of that awful CALAMITY, with which it pleased the ALMIGHTY to afflict him!

But to return, for a last grapple with

ACHILLES' SPEAR.

Now, my Lord, permit me to remark, first, that *ACHILLES'* spear is the only part of his armour that is unworthy of him; and this you select, instead of the emblazoned shield, so distinctly marked as a finished piece of "ART." *HOMER* seemed to have paid so much attention to the other part of his favourite hero's armour, that he scarcely says any thing of this. But even this, my Lord, I can turn against you, as I did Satan's spear against *CAMPBELL*. All that is said of this spear is, that it is paternal, and was cut from the mountain Pelion. What signifies where it was cut? you might say! So, when you observe there was no occasion for the "Norwegian pine," when you liked the "ammiral's" mast, with which to compare Satan's spear, better, I withdraw from the contest, and leave your Lordship to battle with *HOMER* and *MILTON* as to the propriety of any poetical addition to their similies. If the "grey-haired loon" did not skip from the staff, he remains equally sturdy against the "spear of *ACHILLES*."

What I have said of the armour of *DIOMED* and others in *HOMER*, may be said of that of *ACHILLES*;

and without expecting a *coadjutor* in POPE, I looked at the note on the passage, and found these words: "There is wonderful pomp in the description of ACHILLES arming himself, &c. &c. He "is at first *likened to the moonlight*, then to the "*flames of a beacon*, then to a COMET, and lastly "to the SUN himself!"

Your Lordship thinks the execution of a poem *all!** This I deny; and affirm, that, *comparatis comparandis*, if an [epic poem evince as consummate *execution* as a smaller poem, he who composes an epic poem, with this consummate execution, will be a greater poet, in every sense of the word, than he who evinces the utmost and most consummate skill on an inferior and less poetical subject. And I need not hesitate to affirm this, for it is the opinion of all critics, from ARISTOTLE to Dr. JOHNSON.

As to PETRARCH being equal, or reckoned, in Italy, superior, to DANTE, it may be the consequence of some peculiar attachment of the Italians to the name of PETRARCH; but of this they could never persuade me, though fulminated *ex cathedra*

* What! is the conception of such a poem as the Paradise Lost nothing?

by all the Popes that Italy ever produced. And I may safely appeal to the universal opinion, not only of professed critics, but of all men of general common intelligence.

One word more will end all I have to say at present on another subject,—the moral character of POPE. If it was not from want of “money” &c. that I wrote his life, and published an edition of his works, there is another circumstance that might have prevailed with me in giving my opinions, namely, a conscientious conviction of the truth of what I advanced; and what is biography, if failings are not to be mentioned? As to his “ethics,” the poet, I admit, profanes the dignity of his high art, who does not apply the gifts he possesses to the furtherance of TRUTH and of VIRTUE. But I contend, that one epistle of Eloisa will counteract, as a pander to vice, *ten thousand* of POPE’s *ethical* epistles; and I wish your Lordship to look at that glorious passage in MILTON’s prose works, where he speaks of meditating some immortal strain, and you will confess, that, so far from thinking he was telling “lies,” his object was high and holy praise to that Being, to whom he owed the power of praising him.

Whether it was wise to say all I did of POPE, I cannot tell. I spoke as I *sincerely* believed; that it was not *wise* to speak with *candour*! I have found to my cost.

*FALCONER'S SHIPWRECK, DESERT,
HOUNSLOW HEATH.*

What has been said, I conceive, will be sufficient to enable the commonest reader to see the weakness or irrelevancy of all your arguments. In looking back, I shall only notice shortly a few I have omitted. You have spoken of the poetical effect of terms of *art* in *FALCONER'S Shipwreck*. Nothing can have a greater effect than many, in bringing us as it were into the ship, and enabling us to see every action of the men employed in the hour of horror. Nothing can be more beautiful than the description "*of weighing anchor;*" the description of the stately *Britannia*, and her riding on,

"The pride and glory of the *Ægean* main."

The other parts of the landscape are purposely kept out of sight, that every eye and every heart may be fixed on this beautiful object, as she streams on the sight, departing for ever.

But when you speak of the poetry of the tackle, bunt-line, clue lines, &c. do you really think these as poetical as the description of the tempestuous scene of darkness and distress itself? Do you think that when the ship is in the hollow of one of those enormous waves; when

"In that horrid vale,

"She hears no more the roaring of the gale;"

do you think this awful and novel image is not ten thousand times more poetical than such lines as,

"For he who seeks the tempest to disarm,

"Must never first enbrail a lee yard-arm?"

Or,

"Taught aft the sheet, they tally and belay?"

Your cannon itself, my Lord, has smoke and noise, but does no execution. I have spoken of this in my last pamphlet, on the subject of the "devilish artillery" in MILTON. Your criticism, on this point, is sensible and judicious; but of your own cannon we cannot say, as one of the leaders did,

"The TERMS we sent were TERMS of WEIGHT!"

Much as I have said about the poetical effect of ships on their element, and although I have quoted your own striking description before, I cannot resist recalling to the reader's attention the animated picture of this kind from the publication before me:

"The aspect of a storm in the Archipelago is as poetical as need be, the sea being particularly short, dashing, and dangerous, and the navigation intricate and broken by the isles and currents. Cape Sigeum, the tumuli of the Troad, Lemnos, Tenedos, all added to the associations of the time. But what seemed the most '*poetical*' of all at the moment, were the numbers (about

two hundred) of Greek and Turkish craft, which were obliged to 'cut and run' before the wind, from their unsafe anchorage, some for Tenedos, some for other isles, some for the main, and some it might be for eternity. The sight of these little scudding vessels, darting over the foam in the twilight, now appearing and now disappearing between the waves in the cloud of night, with their peculiarly *white* sails, (the Levant sails not being of '*coarse canvass*,' but of white cotton,) skimming along as quickly, but less safely, than the sea-mews which hovered over them; their evident distress, their reduction to fluttering specks in the distance, their crowded succession, their *littleness*, as contending with the giant element, which made our stout forty-four's *teak* timbers (she was built in India) creak again; their aspect and their motion, all struck me as something far more 'poetical' than the mere broad, brawling, shipless sea, and the sullen winds, could possibly have been without them."

This is a beautiful picture indeed; but the extraordinary circumstance is, that if I could have painted it, I could not have brought any thing in the world so much in favour of the principles of poetry I advocate, and AGAINST yourself. I will mention a few circumstances.

"The sight of these little *scudding* vessels, *darting* over the *foam*, in the TWILIGHT, now *appearing* and now *disappearing between the waves in the cloud of night*, with their peculiarly *white* sails, *skimming* along as *quickly*, but *less* safely, than the SEA-MEWS which hovered over them; their evident distress, their reduc-

tion to *fluttering specks* in the distance, their crowded succession, their *littleness*, as contending with the GIANT ELEMENT!!”*

* This most picturesque, beautiful, and animated passage from Lord BYRON has been quoted in the Gentleman’s Magazine; but such is the *impartiality* of the press, and such is the difficulty, not only of getting fair play, but even a *hearing*, that in one of the most respectable of the London periodical publications, and the *oldest*, and so long distinguished by a *name* that would at least imply something like “*audi alteram partem*,” this passage from Lord BYRON is quoted, when not only the answer to this passage is kept out of sight, but even any notice that an answer at all to Lord BYRON has been published, is OMITTED.

Another critic, professing to know nothing of the subject, nor condescending, I suppose, to look at or read what was reviewed, very sagaciously confining his observations to what appeared, not in the page, but on the top of it, found out, first, that I was very excursive, as if I could answer Lord BYRON without going where I was led; and, secondly, thought, only looking at the words on the top of the page, (Sun, Sea, HOMER, &c.) it was an admirable proof of the author’s logic!!! If this critic had condescended to read only the words with which the pages were headed, to the last chapter, entitled the “Doctor’s Hat,” they would have found that the titles of the chapter were not meant as logic, but as shewing Lord BYRON’s various positions, more ludicrously than seriously.

All the other periodical publications admitted, more or less, the advantage I had in this game of “Bowls” over my noble opponent; and I cannot mention this circumstance without returning my thanks to the Editor, the only Editor who admitted warmly, and promptly, what the others, with the exceptions mentioned, could not entirely deny.* I may say the same, though a perfect stranger, respecting the language of that one Magazine, when I wrote the answer to CAMPBELL!

How different would have been the language of the periodical publications I have spoken of, in case Lord BYRON had *turned*

* Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine.

Thank you, my Lord ! Any one who casts his eye over the words I have marked, will see how much of NATURE, and how little of ART, appears in the poetry of this animated description ; and I conclude this observation by turning the most richly coloured passage in your publication, my Lord, AGAINST yourself.

Whether the mere *brawling, shipless* sea, and *the tables* on me ! But though the victory has been tacitly, and by some reluctantly, acknowledged, not one has done me the justice, which is all I ask, of placing Lord BYRON's arguments and my answers side by side.

In fact the secret history of reviewing is now pretty well understood. One of the " princely merchants of the Muses " pays a considerable sum of money for a poem ; he knows and employs many men of talent, who occasionally furnish works for his warehouse. Most of these writers either write in, or can command the *entrée* of, some Magazine or Review. Into their hands a work, purchased for a large price, is consigned to be reviewed : if the bookseller give nothing, it is seldom he cares about any review ; but he can command it, if he thinks it of importance. When a person has a power over one popular Review, a review of the poem purchased appears immediately, and the book is sent, *before publication*, to particular journals. I know one instance where this has been done, and where a hundred pounds have been offered to writers who have the *entrée*, as it is called, of other Reviews, for an article on the purchased work : an able and popular writer gets both ways, from the publisher, and from the Review in which he writes, at five, or ten, or fifteen, or perhaps twenty, pounds a sheet. A " provincial " poet or critic, in the mean time, wonders he is not taken notice of, which he seldom is, unless for *particular purposes*. Mr. PENNIE, a young man of genius, but in poverty, has written a long poem of high poetical merit, and never has been able to get it even mentioned in any publication, one alone excepted.

the *sullen* winds, (as your Lordship, with the skill of a rhetorician, not as a reasoner, calls them,) could be as poetical without the vessels, I say not ; but, when thus seen, and thus set before us, I fearlessly repeat, that to those winds, to that element so gigantic, against which their "littleness" contended, we owe the most picturesque and poetical part of the beauty of this passage.

I have observed, "that your own poetry laughed "at" your "*variable*" principles of criticism, and so animated were you in this description, that you must have utterly forgotten, whilst you wrote it, *its tendency*, which is to establish the "INVARIABLE" principles of NATURE, confirmed by yourself, on the very element with which you are so familiar.

"Take away the 'pyramids,' and what is the 'desert'? Take away Stonehenge from Salisbury Plain, and it is nothing more than Hounslow Heath, or any other unclosed down."—*Byron*.

I will tell you, my Lord, why a desert is poetical without a pyramid : because it conveys ideas of immeasurable extent, of profound silence, of solitude. What is Salisbury Plain without Stonehenge? Stonehenge is poetical from its traditions, and uncertain origin. (See WARTON'S fine sonnet.) But

Hounslow Heath conveys to the mind chiefly ideas of “artificial” life,—turnpike-roads, stage-coaches in all directions, raree-showmen, whose shows “thousands” would look at, who do not look at the sun!! carts and caravans, and butcher boys scampering on horseback with one spur, and my Lord in his coach, with the “poetical LIVERYMAN” behind!

Therefore, HOUNSLOW HEATH is not so poetical as “the Desert,” connected with the idea of solitude, of extent, of sands moving in the vast wilderness; of Arabs telling their wild stories by moonlight, &c.:—these make the “desert” more poetical than Hounslow Heath, with or without a pyramid.

But we must be more particular, now we are come to

SALISBURY PLAIN.

We have been taking a delightful excursion, from Venice to Constantinople, from Athens and the shore of Greece to the deserts and the Pyramids of Egypt, as on ROGERO's horse, from the pyramids and deserts of Egypt, having placed me,

" Ut magus, modo Thebis, modo ATHENIS,"

you have brought me back safely to Salisbury Plain, and within thirty miles of my own door.

And here it is almost time (for which I am sorry) to part, for the excursion has been pleasant; and if we have not quite agreed on the road, I hope we shall part in as good humour as we met. But before I take my leave, suffer me to recall to your recollection the first words of your sentence about the pyramids.

The reader has seen, that you have admitted they are not *so* poetical without the desert and its associations as with them. Now I have quoted my original positions *four* or *five* times, placed them before Mr. CAMPBELL, the Quarterly Review, and your Lordship, and I beg and entreat you again to remember, I never said that WORKS OF ART were *not poetical*, (I must have been an idiot so to have

said,) I only said the sublime and beautiful works of NATURE were, *per se, abstractedly*, MORE SO! Has the AIR of Italy, Milan, &c. affected your Lordship's recollection? "Works of nature are, "*per se*, in what is beautiful or sublime, *more poetical* than any works of art."

"PASSIONS are *more* poetical than the manners "and habits of artificial life."

If you had read what I distinctly laid down, or, having read the first propositions, remembered them, your book would not have been so pleasant, but I cannot concede that any instance you have advanced, has affected my original positions.

Your gods and goddesses; your statues, busts, temples; your arms, shields, and spears, (not forgetting Mrs. UNWIN's *needle* and COWPER's *small-clothes*;) your prospects of cities by sea, Venice, Constantinople, &c.; your pyramids and pigsties; your slop-basins and "*other vessels*;" your livery-man; the desert, Hounslow Heath, (why not Bagshot? it is most poetical of the two,) Salisbury Plain, the poulterer, the rabbits, "white, black, "and grey," vanish at the waving of the wand of truth; and the grotesque assembly becomes

"Like the baseless shadow of a vision."

However, as we are got safe upon Salisbury Plain at last, it is time to make my bow; and I can assure you, my Lord, I look back on many of the

beautiful pictures you have painted with unfeigned delight, though still thinking my principles of poetical criticism not a jot the less "INVARIABLE," in consequence of any arguments you have brought against them.

There are one or two personal passages in your pamphlet, which it is possible, upon second thoughts, you would have omitted. Whether you would do so or not, I shall pass them over *sub silentio*; and

I remain, my Lord, &c.

W. L. BOWLES.

POST SCRIPTUM.

SHIPWRECK.

I forgot to speak of a ship in a tempest as a poetical object ; and this, probably, your Lordship may turn against me. A ship in a tempest undoubtedly is both sublime and terrible ; but what makes it so ? It is the intense sympathy with the terror and distress, that causes the sublimity : do we then sympathize with the people in the ship, or *the ship* ? the men, or the *boards* ? If with the men, then your sympathy is derived from nature. If you knew a ship *had no men* in it, the terror, and those feelings which cause sublimity, would be lost.

CRABBE and COLERIDGE have both taken that moment of terror, when, after conflicting with the waves, the vessel is seen no more ! This gives an indescribable sublimity ; because an image from nature is called up, which shews you those miserable people in despair and agony one moment ;

in the next, the waves are only seen, the storm only heard, and the ship gone.

COLERIDGE's idea is that, at midnight, he beholds a ship tossing, by one flash of lightning ; another flash comes, and

“ He sees no vessel there.”

Whilst we are on the subject, allow me again to advert to that singularly affecting poem, “ The Shipwreck.”

How does FALCONER contrive to make the ship itself an object of sympathy ? By personifying it, as endowed with sense :

“ Now launching headlong down the horrid vale,

“ She hears no more the roaring of the gale.”

The cause of the want of interest in the scenes and classic places by which the ship is surrounded, arises only from the anxiety and sympathy with the mariners, and particularly those for whom we are so much interested. Who at such a moment could bear to have his deep solicitude interrupted, by being called upon to contemplate even those shores, where

“ *Godlike SOCRATES and PLATO shone ?*”

(*Shipwreck.*)

As the scene rises in terror, how fine is the introduction of the ANGEL of the WIND :

“ And lo ! tremendous o'er the deep he springs,

“ The inflaming sulphur flashing from his wings ;

“ Hark ! his strong voice the dismal silence breaks.”

Is not this infinitely more poetical than

“Taught aft the sheet, they tally and belay?”

In some cases, where nautical terms are used, the effect, I admit, is very striking, in bringing you, as it were, into the midst of this forlorn and agonized crew. Such is the animated passage,—

“‘Square fore and aft the yards,’ the Master calls:

“‘You Timoneers her motion still attend,

“‘For on your steerage all our lives depend:

“‘So, steady! meet her! watch the curving prow,

“‘And from the gale directly let her go!’

“‘Starboard again!’ the watchful Pilot cries:

“‘Starboard!’ th’ obedient Timoneer replies!”

Who can read this without fancying himself amidst the crew, and almost hearing the conflict of the elements, the words given and repeated,

“‘Starboard again!’ the watchful Pilot cries:

“‘Starboard!’ th’ obedient Timoneer replies!”

But an image from artificial life puts to flight almost all sympathy.

“Fate spurs her on!”

A few more critical observations occur on looking over what your Lordship has advanced.

Architecture.

You observe that it is the architecture of Westminster Abbey, that makes it poetical : the tower for “making patent shot,” accordingly, would be equally *poetical*, if the architecture was the same. I affirm this is not so. Westminster Abbey is, and must be, poetical, from moral associations more than from its architecture. “The *object*” cannot be seen without these associations, connected with time, and the illustrious dead.

I say, your answer is that of a *painter*, not a poet ! The architecture would make “the tower “for patent shot” equally *picturesque*, as an object, for painting sees nothing but the surface, but it would not make it as *poetical*, except in mere description ; and I defy your Lordship, and all the poets who ever existed, to make “the patent shot “tower” poetical, let the architecture be what it

will, unless they keep *all its uses* and *name* out of sight. In using the word “objects,” of course I imply “poetical” objects, which include not only the visible form, but the associations. Nay, Sir CHRISTOPHER WREN’s additions to Westminster Abbey are not so poetical as the Abbey itself, though their “*architecture*” were as appropriate as it is inharmonious. I cannot shew the absurdity of a *poetical* tower for “patent shot,” so well as by a plain instance—that of the “Old Minster” and the “Glass-houses” at Bristol! If a glass-house had the same architecture, to a painter it would appear the same; but try the effect in poetry. CHATTERTON, speaking of the spirit of ÆLLA, says,

..... “Whether.....
“Or fiery round the MINSTER glare!”

Try the effect of the other building, supposing its *architecture* the same,

“Or fiery round the ‘Glass-house’ glare!”
the whole passage becomes ludicrous.

The Wall of Malamocco, Eurine, and Argo.

When I speak of the sea, I do not speak of the Adriatic, or any part of it in particular. You take particular *spots*, and ask, whether, in that spot, the

“ *master*” that curbs the sea, be not more poetical than the sea? “ *Curb the Adriatic!*” What must this strip of sea be to bear being “ so curbed?” Its poetical SUBLIMITY must be entirely subdued, by Venice in one corner, and “ *a wall*” in the other! Bring your “ walls,” my Lord, to “ curb” THE PACIFIC! and you would do something! But the mighty Cordelleiras, of NATURE, only can do that.

The “ *Argo*” entering into the Euxine must have been, indeed, a most poetical object; and I can readily feel with the poet, standing on the spot from whence the spectacle might have been first seen, repeating the lines from the Greek tragedian. No ship had been there before! What reflections, fears, and awe, would that thought alone create! But I ask, is the interest, even here, derived from the ship as a *work of art*? It is in part derived, no doubt, from the idea of the courage, enterprise, and mastery of man over this great element, in part from the beauty added to the scene; but the novelty, the awe, and other complex ideas, excite the highest poetical enthusiasm, which I should partake with your Lordship, but should not think my principles of the sublime of nature in the least affected by this instance. For, *abstractedly*, the Euxine is a *more sublime* object than the *Argo*; and if you admit associations, they must be derived from feelings] of NATURE.

Having now, I believe, examined all of your arguments, I must add, that it appears to me, and I think it will appear so to every attentive and unprejudiced reader, that the "tall" ship becomes "diminished to a buoy;"—the marble temples sink to dust, or, opposed even to the mountains of America, appear as little as the Pyramids, scarcely seen at the bottom of the engraving called the "scale of mountains;"—Mrs. UNWIN's needle renders not more service than that of Gammer GURTON, which was found in HODGE's "breeches!"—ANTINOUS' bust becomes fragile as the brazen head of Friar BACON;—and HOMER's arms, that make such a glittering shew, impose only for a moment, like the coruscations of a fire-work, which seems to add, as it ascends, a thousand stars and glories to the night, and falls down "*a bit of burnt stick!*"

So my Lord, the airy style, the pleasant stories, the transient pictures, the brilliant imagery, of your publication, are as beautiful as they are baseless; because, on the least touch of argumentative examination, they are reduced to nothing,

"Cum ventum *ad veram* est sensus, NATURA repugnat."

In fully, and I hope satisfactorily, developing my ideas on the subject of this controversy, I have

thought it necessary to go into more minute detail, to prevent the possibility of future misrepresentation :* having done this, and being convinced that misrepresentation must now be from design, I hope to drop for ever the controversial pen.

The “order” of classing the highest kind of poetry is not mine, and, therefore, not *arbitrary*; “the order” is that admitted by all who ever thought or wrote on the subject.

Lord BYRON’s code is *arbitrary*, and not mine. As to the poet being ranked according to his “*execution, and not the branch, of his art,*” I have never considered the *branch* of the art as constituting a poet independent of the *execution*. I estimate a poet’s character from both.

Though I hope to lay down, after what I have now said, my controversial pen, if a single expression occur in the preceding pages contrary to the fairest mode of argument, it has not been intentional.

The public will decide between us; but one concluding observation must be made. Your Lordship has entertained us with a pleasant story of the “*doctor’s*” HAT, alluding to my “*sensitiveness*” to criticism; therefore I devote what remains to the “chapter of the”

* This has since been done, in my opinion *wilfully*; for which opinion the reasons will be given.

DOCTOR'S HAT.

“ Mr. BOWLES's extreme sensibility reminds me of a circumstance which occurred on board of a frigate in which I was a passenger. The surgeon wore a *wig*. Upon this ornament he was extremely tenacious. One day a young lieutenant, in the course of a facetious discussion, said, “ Suppose now, doctor, I should take off ‘ your *hat*.’ ” ‘ Sir,’ replied the doctor, ‘ I shall talk no ‘ longer with you; you grow *scurrilous*.’ ”—*Byron*.

Allow me only to say, that for thirty years I never made *one reply* to any criticism, good, bad, or indifferent; nor should I have done so now, if I had had common *fair* play. But I must *hint*, that the “ *doctor's hat*,” in my opinion, fits your Lordship better than it does me; for the instant your early poems were sent into the world, and encountered the rude breath of the critics, you *fell foul* of critics, poets, statesmen, lords, ladies, and, among the number, none received less indulgence than your present correspondent. You have admitted with what good-humour this *criticism* on my temper and talents was met, whether it was *more* than I deserved or not.

* “ HIPPOCRATES says, Let us be covered. In what chapter? “ the CHAPTER of HATS.”—*Moliere*.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

ΝΥΚΤΙ ΕΟΙΚΩΣ. P. 15.

EVERY classical reader will recollect the passage of Apollo descending from the top of Olympus to avenge the cause of his priest. POPE has completely misunderstood, as well as weakened, the image by expansion. In the original, the *action* of the incensed Deity is brought before us, and the simile is added, without any amplification,

Ο δ' ἦε νυκτὶ εοικώς.

HOMER says, "Apollo descended from the top of "Olympus," having his bow on his shoulder, and his pharetra of arrows. POPE says, "*bent* was his bow! Instead of his being represented as descending in his wrath, "like night," POPE says,

"Breathing revenge, a sudden night he spread,
"And gloomy darkness roll'd around his head!"

The last line is from SANDY's translation of the Psalms,

"Gloomy darkness roll'd beneath his feet."

The lines of POPE are very fine, undoubtedly; but I, who am called such a lover of *minute* particulars, prefer infinitely HOMER's brief and bold imagery.

The passage, to which I alluded, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, has been so often quoted, I did not particularize it; but I here give it to confirm what I said, that one of the criterions of a true poet is, to know when to be general, and when specific. The current in its wanderings is thus exquisitely described;

“The current that with gentle motion glides,
 “Thou know’st, being stopt, impatiently doth rage;
 “But when his fair course is not hindered,
 “He makes *sweet music* with the *enamelled stones*,
 “Giving a gentle *kiss* to *every sedge*
 “He overtaketh in his *pilgrimage*;
 “And so by many *winding nooks* he strays,
 “With willing sport, to the WILD OCEAN.”

How many images of poetry are here brought together in one delightful picture! If my opponents should say, that, according to my principles, “every sedge” should be particularized; I shall only remark, that I think SHAKESPEARE would have spoiled its beauty if he had made the description one jot more or less specific. Could he have made a Venetian canal, or the canal at Paddington, as beautiful, with all his genius? No: because

“Ornari RES IPSA negat;”

and, therefore, as the same genius, by “*any treatment*,” cannot make one subject as poetical as another, it must be, because one subject is more *poetical*, that is, more adapted to poetry than another. Yet, can it be believed, that a whole pamphlet should be written to prove that there is nothing in art or nature POETICAL, abstractedly from its treatment? that the writer should amuse himself by asserting he “had proved this?” and that a quibble upon the meaning of the word “poetical,”

which I originally defined, "adapted to poetry," should make Mr. CAMPBELL call such reasonings an answer? Will he or Lord BYRON say a river is not more adapted to poetry than a canal? or that SHAKESPEARE, or CAMPBELL, or BYRON,* by "*any treatment*," could make it as beautiful in description as they could make the other? Let Mr. CAMPBELL's metaphysician answer this question without circuitous subterfuges, or elaborate quibbling, if he can!

If *picturesque* obviously mean "adapted to painting," who could think a *point* gained by a quibble on the word?

Having occasion to look into VOLNEY's Travels in Egypt, the following passage struck me as so applicable to the subject, that I transcribe it.

"No country is LESS PICTURESQUE, LESS ADAPTED "to the pencil of the painter, or the descriptions of the "poet; nothing can be seen of what constitutes the "charm of their pictures; *and it is remarkable, that* "neither the Arabs nor the Ancients make any mention "of Egyptian poets. What, indeed, could an Egyptian "sing on the reed of GESNER or THEOCRITUS? He "sees neither limpid streams, nor verdant lawns, nor "solitary caves; and is equally a stranger to vallies, "mountain sides, and pendant rocks."

He goes on to say, "THOMSON could not there have "known either the whistling of the winds in the forest, "the rolling of thunder among the mountains, or the "peaceful majesty of ancient woods; he could not have "observed the awful tempest, nor the sweet tranquillity "of the succeeding calm."—*Vol. i. page 245, English translation.*

* These objections will be more attentively considered in the sequel.

AN
ANSWER
TO
SOME OBSERVATIONS
OF
THOMAS CAMPBELL, ESQ;
IN HIS
SPECIMENS OF BRITISH POETS.

REVISED

SOME OBSERVATIONS

THOMAS CAMPBELL, ESQ.

OF THE

A LETTER, &c.

SIR,

A Short time since a friend of yours, and one of the most distinguished poets of the present day, informed me that there had appeared, in the Morning Chronicle, an extract from your Specimens of British Poets, entitled, "CAMPBELL'S Answer to BOWLES." I have since read, with much pleasure, the work from which the extract was taken; and I beg to return you my thanks, for the kind manner with which my name is introduced, though you profess to differ from me, and state at large the grounds of that difference, on a point of criticism. The criticism of mine, which you have discussed, is that which appears in the last volume of the last edition of Pope's Works, entitled, "On the Poetical Character of Pope."

As the opinion pronounced by the editor of the Morning Chronicle will probably be the opinion of all who read, without much reflection, *not* my criticism, but *your* representation of it; I am bound, in justice to myself, to state the grounds of my proposition clearly; to meet the arguments you have brought against it, manfully but respectfully; and to make the public (at least that part of the public which may be interested in such a discussion) a *judge* between us!

I feel it the more incumbent on me to do this, knowing the deserved popularity of your name, and the impression which your representation of my arguments must make on the public; though I must confess, it does appear to me that you could not have read the criticism which you discuss.

I do not think that any thing, Sir, you have advanced, at all shakes the propositions I have laid down; and, moreover, I do not doubt I shall be able to *prove* that you have misconceived my meaning; ill supported your own arguments; *confounded* what I had *distinguished*; and even given me grounds to think you had replied to propositions which you *never read*, or, at least, of which you could have read only the *first* sentence, omitting that which was integrally and essentially connected with it.

In an article in the Edinburgh Review, the same mis-statement was made, and the same course

of argument pursued. I feel, indeed, bound to thank Mr. JEFFREY, if he wrote the article, for the liberal tribute he paid to my *poetry*, at the expense of my *canons of criticism*. But in truth, from the coincidences here remarked, I might be led to think Mr. CAMPBELL wrote the Review, were I not more disposed to think he drew his knowledge of my criticism on POPE, *not* from the criticism itself, but, *at second-hand*, from the *criticism on the criticism* in that Review, inadvertently involving himself in all its misconceptions and misrepresentations.

For, I beg you to observe, Sir, that in my first proposition, I do not say that WORKS OF ART are in no instances *poetical*; but only that “what is “sublime or beautiful in works of nature is MORE “so!” The very expression “*more so*” is a proof that poetry belongs, though not in the same degree, to both. I must also beg you to remark, that, having laid down this position, I observe, in the very next sentence, (lest it should be misunderstood as it now is, and was by a writer in the Edinburgh Review,) substantially as follows,—that the loftier passions of human nature are *more* poetical than artificial *manners*; the one being eternal, the other local and transitory. I think the mere stating of these circumstances will be sufficient to shew, that both the Edinburgh Review and yourself have completely misrepre-

sented my meaning. With respect to the images
 FROM ART, which you have adduced as a trium-
 phant answer to what I laid down, I shall generally
 observe, that *your own illustrations* are against
 you. The Edinburgh Review, in the same man-
 ner, had spoken of the Pyramids. Now the Py-
 ramids of Egypt, the Chinese Wall, &c. had oc-
 curred to me, at the time of writing, as undoubtedly
 POETICAL in WORKS of ART; but I supposed that
 any reflecting person would see that these were
 poetical, *not essentially as works of art*, but from
 associations both with the highest feelings of nature,
 and some of her sublimest external works. The
 generations swept away round the ancient base of
 the Pyramids, the ages that are past since their
 erection, the mysterious obscurity of their origin,
 and many other complex ideas, enter into the
 imagination at the thought of these wonderful
 structures, besides the association with boundless
 deserts; as the Wall of China is associated with
 unknown rocks, mountains, and rivers. Build a
 pyramid of *new* brick, of the same dimensions as
 the pyramids of Egypt, in Lincoln's-Inn Fields,
 and then say how much of the poetical sublimity of
 the immense and immortal piles in the deserts of
 Egypt is derived, *not from art*, but from moral
 associations!* Place your own image of the

is nature
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* A London critic, in the Quarterly Review, says, he knows
 nothing of Nature, external, moral, or general! I believe him.

“GIANT OF THE WESTERN STAR” upon such a pyramid, if it could be made as HIGH as the Andes, and say whether it would be considered as *poetical* as now it appears, “looking from its throne of clouds o’er half the world.” I had often considered these and such instances generally and specifically; and I think, if you reflect a moment, you will agree with me, that though they are works of art, they are rendered POETICAL chiefly by moral associations and physical circumstances.* But to come to your most interesting example. Let us examine the ship which you have described so beautifully. On what does the poetical beauty depend? not on *art*, but NATURE. Take away† the *waves*, the *winds*, the *sun*, that, in association with the streamer and sails, make them look so beautiful! take all poetical associations away, ONE will become a strip of blue bunting, and the other a piece of coarse canvas on three tall poles!!

You speak also of the *poetical* effect of the *drum* and *fife*! Are the drum and fife poetical, without other associations? In the quotation from Shake-

* As Mr. D’ISRAELI has taken such antipathy to “NATURE,” I have left out the word, where the sense could be understood without it.

† Lord BYRON’s argument is a verbal quibble on “*Take away*.” The *sense* will be obvious, though it is true, if there were no sea, there would be no ships!! But the *chief poetical beauty* is nevertheless derived from Nature, according to Mr. CAMPBELL’S OWN description.

speare which you adduce, the fife is "ear piercing," and the drum is "spirit stirring;" and both are associated, by the consummate art of Shakespeare—with what?—with the "PRIDE, POMP, and CIRCUMSTANCE of GLORIOUS WAR!" and passions and pictures are called up; those of fortitude, of terror, of pity, &c. &c.; arms glittering in *the sun*, and banners waving in the AIR. It is these pictures and passions from NATURE,* and these alone, which make a drum or fife poetical; and let the same drum or fife be heard before a booth in a fair, or in a regiment with *wooden* guns, and this poetical effect will be lost. I therefore turn your own instances against you.

What I said respecting descriptive poetry, in my Essay on the Poetical Character of POPE, was not with a view of shewing that a poet should be a botanist, or even a Dutch painter; but that no one could be "pre-eminent," as a great (*descriptive*) poet, without this knowledge, which peculiarly distinguishes COWPER and THOMSON. The objects I had in view, when I used the expressions objected to, were *Pope's Pastorals* and *Windsor Forest*. I will appeal to your own quotation from the first of these poets. Why is COWPER so eminent as a descriptive poet? for I am now speaking of this part of his poetical character alone. Because he is the most accurate

* To distinguish from local and artificial manners.

describer of the works of *external nature*, and for that reason is superior, as a *descriptive poet*, to POPE.* Every tree, and every peculiarity of colour and shape, are so described, that the reader becomes a spectator, and is doubly interested with the truth of colouring, and the beauty of the scene, so vividly and so delightfully painted; and you yourself have observed the same in your criticism on this exquisite poet, in WORDS AS DECISIVE AS MY OWN.

Having thus merely stated my sentiments in general, as they stand in order and connection in the Essay on the Poetic Character of POPE, I shall now pursue your arguments more in detail.

[You say, “as the subject of *inspired* fiction, “*nature includes* artificial forms and *manners*.” “RICHARDSON is no less a painter of nature than “HOMER!” I will not stoop to notice your vague expression of “*inspired fiction* ;” but will admit that RICHARDSON is not less a painter of nature than HOMER. For, indeed, RICHARDSON,

Irritat, mulcet, falsis terroribus implet,
Ut magus!

But let us take Clarissa Harlowe, the most affecting of RICHARDSON’S “*inspired fictions*!” Though Lovelace be a character in ARTIFICIAL LIFE, the interest we take in the history of Clarissa is derived from PASSIONS. Its great characteristic

* Mr. CAMPBELL’S own quotation will be seen in the Postscript.

is PATHOS; and this I have distinguished as a far more essential property of poetry than flowers and leaves! The passions excited make RICHARDSON so far, and no farther, poetical. There is nothing poetical in the feathered hat or the sword-knot of Lovelace; nor in the gallant but *artificial* manners of this accomplished villain. In Sir Charles Grandison the character of Clementina is *poetical*, and for the same reasons; but there is nothing very *poetical* in Sir Charles himself, or “the venerable Mrs. Shirley!”

I must here observe, that when I speak of passions as poetical, I speak of those which are most elevated or pathetic; for it is true, passions are described* in TERENCE as well as SOPHOCLES; but I confine my definition to what is *heroic*, *sublime*, *pathetic*, or *beautiful*, in human feelings; and this distinction is kept in view through the Essay on the Poetic Character of POPE. SHAKESPEARE displays the same wonderful powers in Falstaff as in Lear, but not the same *poetical* powers; and the provinces of comedy and tragedy will be always separate; the one relating to the passions, the other combined with the *passing fashions*, and incidental variations of the “Cynthia of the minute.”

To proceed; you say, “HOMER himself is a minute describer of the works of art!” But are

* This is the reason why I used the expression of *passions* derived from *manners*.

his descriptions of works of art *more* poetical than his descriptions of the great feelings of nature? Nay, the whole of the *Odyssey* derives its peculiar charm from the scenes of NATURE; as the *Iliad* does from its loftier passions. But do you really think that the catalogue of the Grecian ships is as *poetical* as the animated horses of Achilles; and do you think HOMER would have been so great a poet, if he had been only a minute describer of works of art? Jeune as the catalogue of the leaders and ships is, how much *more* interesting and poetical is it rendered by the brief interpositions of varied and natural landscape; and it is this very circumstance that gives the dry account any interest at all. Besides, was the age of HOMER an æra of refinement or *artificial* life? by whom not even such a *poetical work of art* as a *bridge* is mentioned!*

But RICHARDSON and HOMER are not sufficient to overwhelm me and my hypothesis; and it is remarked, as if the argument were at once *decisive*,

* Mr. CAMPBELL asks me if *γεφύρας* might not signify a bridge? I answer, it may signify any thing that connects the two banks of a river: but he is very welcome to the bridge, and it shall be as beautiful in architecture as Westminster bridge, if he likes: Yet what will it serve him respecting the main argument, which was, that HOMER lived in an age before the existence of works of the highest perfection in art; so his Jupiter, Apollo, and Neptune, and his most exquisite delineations of scenes of nature, and forms of gods, and passions of the heart, could not have been derived from those *secondary* sources of intellectual delight.

that MILTON is full of imagery derived from art ;
 “ Satan’s spear,” for example, is compared to the
 “ MAST OF SOME GREAT AMMIRAL !” Supposing
 it is, do you really think that such a comparison
 makes the description of Satan’s spear a whit *more*
poetical? I think *much less* so. But MILTON was
 not so unpoetical as you imagine, though I think
 his simile does not greatly add to our poetical ideas
 of Satan’s spear ! The “ mast of the great admiral”
 might have been left out ; but remark, in this image
 MILTON DOES NOT compare Satan’s spear “ *with*
 “ *the mast of some great admiral,*” as you assert.
 The passage is,

“ His spear, to equal which the TALLEST PINE
 “ HEWN ON NORWEGIAN HILLS TO BE the mast
 “ Of some great ammiral, were but a wand !”

You leave out the chief, I might say the only, cir-
 cumstance which reconciles the “ mast” to us ;
 and having detruncated MILTON’S image, trium-
 phantly say, “ MILTON is full of imagery “ derived
 “ from art !!” You then advance, “ *dextrâque*
 “ *sinistrâque,*” and say, not only Satan’s spear is
 compared to an “ *admiral’s mast,*” but “ *his shield*
 “ *to the moon seen through a telescope!*”

My dear Sir, consider a little. You forget the
 passage ; or have purposely left out more than half
 of its essential poetical beauty. What reason have
 I to complain, when you use MILTON thus ? I
 beseech you recollect MILTON’S image.

“ His pond’rous shield

“ Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb

“ Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views

“ At EVENING, FROM THE TOP OF FESOLE,

“ Or in VALDARNO, to DESCRIBE NEW LANDS,

“ RIVERS, OR MOUNTAINS, IN HER SPOTTY GLOBE.”

Who does not perceive the art of the poet in introducing, besides the telescope, as if conscious how unpoetical it was in itself, all the circumstances from NATURE, *external nature*,—the evening—the top of Fesole—the scenes of Valdarno—and the LANDS, MOUNTAINS, and RIVERS, in the moon’s orb? It is these which make the passage poetical, and not the *telescope*!—”

Whilst I am on this subject, let me point out a grand and sublime passage of this great poet, in which images *from art* are most successfully introduced, and made most highly poetical. The passage I allude to is in the *Paradise Regained*—the picture of Imperial Rome.

“ On each side an Imperial city stood,

“ With TOW’RS and TEMPLES proudly elevate

“ On seven small hills, with PALACES adorn’d,

“ PORCHES, and THEATRES, BATHS, AQUEDUCTS,

“ STATUES, and TROPHIES, and TRIUMPHAL ARCS,

“ GARDENS, and GROVES, presented to his eyes,

“ Above the height of mountains interpos’d,” &c.—

“ The CITY which thou see’st, no other deem

“ Than GREAT and GLORIOUS Rome, QUEEN of the EARTH

“ So far renowned, and with the spoils enrich’d

“ Of nations; there the CAPITOL thou see’st,

“ Above the rest, lifting his stately head

“ On the Tarpeian rock, her citadel

“ Impregnable, and there Mount Palatine,

" The Imperial palace, compass huge, and high,
 " The structure, skill of noblest architects,
 " With GILDED BATTLEMENTS, CONSPICUOUS far,
 " TURRETS, and TERRACES, and GLITTERING SPIRES," &c.
 " Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see
 " What conflux issuing forth, or ent'ring in,
 " PRÆTORS, PROCONSULS to their provinces
 " Hasting, or on return, in robes of state,
 " LICTORS, and RODS, the ensigns of their power,
 " Legions, and cohorts, Turns of horse and wings,
 " Or embassies from regions far remote,
 " In various habits on the Appian road,
 " Or on th' Æmilian," &c.

This truly grand and most poetical picture I here gratuitously set before you, convinced as you must now, I think, be, of the weakness of your telescope, and admiral's mast ! And with the impression left on the imagination by this lofty and beautiful assemblage, drawn chiefly from art, but mixed up in a grand and impressive picture, by MILTON's consummate powers of painting, I will still contend, that " images drawn from what is
 " BEAUTIFUL and SUBLIME in NATURE, are *more*
 " *poetical* than images drawn from art."

I cannot dismiss this part of the subject, and the " launching of the ship," which I have already touched on, without quoting your own animated description.

" Those who have ever witnessed the spectacle
 " of the launching of a ship of the line, will,
 " perhaps, forgive me for adding this to the exam-
 " ples of the sublime objects of artificial life. Of
 " that spectacle I can never forget the impression.

“ When the vast bulwark sprung from her cradle, the CALM WATER on which she swung MAJESTICALLY round, gave the IMAGINATION a contrast of the STORMY ELEMENT, on which she was soon to ride. All the days of battle, and nights of danger, she had to encounter; all the ENDS of the EARTH which she had to visit; and all that she had to do and suffer for her country, rose in awful presentiment before the mind; and when the heart gave her a benediction, it was like one pronounced on a *living being!*” Now let me ask you, when you so beautifully described this ship, why was it necessary to describe its LAUNCHING at all? If images derived from art are as beautiful and sublime as those derived from nature, why was it necessary to bring your ship *off the stocks*? It was complete, as far as art was concerned, before; it had the same sails, the same streamers, and the same tackle. But surely your own illustration is decidedly in my favour, when it appears, from this animated description, to make the object of art so poetically interesting, you are obliged to have recourse to NATURE!

This circumstance, confirms my doubt, whether you ever really read my estimate of POPE's Poetical Character. Even if I had been less explicit, could you suppose that, when I used the expression of

general nature, I meant to confine the idea that expression conveyed, to *external* nature alone?

You observe, in page 264 of your first volume of Specimens of British Poets, that "Nature is
 "the poet's goddess; but by nature no one rightly
 "understands her mere inanimate face, however
 "charming it may be; or the simple landscape
 "painting of trees, clouds, precipices, and flowers.
 "Why then try POPE, or any other poet EXCLU-
 "SIVELY BY HIS POWERS OF DESCRIBING inani-
 "mate phænomena? Nature, in the wide and
 "proper sense of the word, means life in all its
 "circumstances—nature MORAL as well as ex-
 "ternal."—*Campbell's Specimens.*

Have I ever tried POPE by the exclusive power of painting *inanimate phænomena*? Have I ever denied that Nature, in the proper sense of the word, means Nature *moral* as well as external! Have I not, in the very first sentences of the observations on POPE's Poetical Character, said nearly the same thing? Could this utterly escape your notice, if you had (I will not say read the *criticism*;) but only *looked* at the two first sentences?

To set before you, in one view, your palpable perversions of my positions, I will briefly state the course of my argument, and your representation of it. The plain course of my argument was simply this:—1st. *Works of Nature*, speaking of those more beautiful and sublime, are more sublime and

beautiful than works of Art; therefore more poetical.—2d. The passions of the human heart, which are the same in all ages, and which are the causes of the sublime and pathetic in sentiment, are more *poetical* than *artificial manners*.—3d. The great poet of human passions is the most consummate master of his art; and the heroic, the lofty, and the pathetic, as belonging to this class, are distinguished.—4th. If these premises be true, the descriptive poet, who paints from an intimate knowledge of external nature, is more poetical, supposing the fidelity and execution equal, *not* than the painter of human passions, but the painter of external circumstances in *artificial life*; as COWPER paints a morning walk, and POPE a game of cards!

This is the ground of my argument; and your representation, leaving out the most essential part, is this: “He alone is a poet who paints from works “of external nature; and his knowledge of external nature must be as minute as that of a botanist and Dutch painter!”* I appeal to your book; and if this were not the mutilated representation of my argument, you would never have thought it necessary to say that SOPHOCLES was a GREAT POET, notwithstanding there is no minute painting of “leaves,” &c. in Philoctetes! I have here given a short analysis of my argument, and

* Yet Mr. Campbell has not misrepresented me! he says.

your *mutilation* of it; on which mutilation alone your build your *answer*. For, indeed, you have totally left out the middle of my argument, and ludicrously joined the heads and the legs, like the PICTURE of NOBODY in the London shops.

If this be so, I ask you whether you do not think I have some reason to make this remonstrance? You leave out the most material part of my proposition; and, taking a sentence relating to another point in *another* place, you separate it from its direct application, and misapply it to that with which it had no relation; omitting what was connected and even consecutive, and *connecting* what was neither the one nor the other.

The minute knowledge of *external* nature, which I laid down as one essential of a great descriptive poet, you apply to *tragedians*, in whose more elevated works (the subjects of which are the loftier passions of *general* nature) descriptions of *external* nature ought least of all to have place. But perhaps I ought to thank you for thus bringing me back to the delightful remembrance of the most interesting studies of my youth,—the tragedies of SOPHOCLES, and particularly the Sperchian fountains, the Lemnian rock, and the solitary cave of Philoctetes. Nor can I forget, that one of the companions of my youthful studies, now in the dust, made this melancholy abode the subject of one of the most beautiful, and affecting, and pic-

turesque sonnets in the English language : the insertion of which in your next edition,* would be, I am persuaded, far more acceptable than many specimens you have admitted.

To return to SOPHOCLES. There is no minute description of leaves and flowers; but you have forgotten that the affecting story of the desolate Philoctetes displays not only the higher passions, but exhibits the interesting display of many of nature's external beauties, of her most romantic scenery, of her most secluded solitudes. It is many years since I read the play; but recollecting its wild poetic scenery, and impassioned language, I repeated, with a sigh,

Νυν δ', ω κρηναι, γλυκιον τε ποτον,

Λειπομεν υμας, λειπομεν ηδη,

Δοξης εποτε τηςδ' επιβαντες.

Χαιρ', ω Αημεν πεδον αμφιαλον, &c.

It is the rocks, the caves, the wild and solitary scenery, the desert island, and the surrounding seas, all images of nature, that, mixed with the language of human passions derived from the same general nature, give this ancient and unique drama its peculiar charm; reminding us of the romantic imagery in the Tempest and Midsummer Night's Dream, so beautifully interwoven by SHAKSPEARE in those interesting dramas.

* Written by the Rev. THOS. RUSSELL, of New College, Oxford.

The miserable abode of the lonely inhabitant of Lemnos is marked by one image drawn from art, which is so minute, and sets so strongly before us the wants and resources of the desolate exile, that none of the minute circumstances which render so natural the narrative of Robinson Crusoe, can be imagined more affecting. I allude to the

“Αυτοξυλόν γ’ ἐκπωμά φαυλοῦρος τινος
 “Τεχνηματ’ ἀνδρος.”

in the cave of Philoctetes. There is nothing poetical in an ill-carved cup; but in this place it is rendered poetical, and most strikingly affecting, by the associated circumstances.

In the quotation from SHAKESPEARE, where you triumphantly appeal to the “*towers*, and solemn “*temples*, and gorgeous *palaces*,” recollect, Sir, the tower is “*cloud-capt*,” the temple is associated with the “solemnity” of religious awe; and “*palaces*” with the splendour of earthly magnificence: and all these images are brought into one grand and awful picture, to shew the mighty devastation of final ruin; and are associated with that leading idea of the destruction of the *globe* itself, which will leave not a WRECK behind! Thus the “*cloud-capt towers*” become highly poetical; nor can I leave this point without speaking a word of the particular object of the tower. POPE himself has thought its image so pleasing, that, in the cata-

logue of ships from HOMER, he sets before us the prospect of English spires, not Grecian. If the "cloud-capt tower" itself be a striking, and often a beautiful, object; how much more poetical, when, grey with years, or illumined by the setting sun, it carries the thought to that worship with which it is connected, the sabbaths of our forefathers; or harmonizes with the soft, sinking landscape of evening, and the ideas of another world.

If ever I should have the pleasure of seeing you in this county, in which I should sincerely rejoice, not far from my own house I could shew you a tower which is "cloud-capt,"* but *not* poetical; though it is of the same size with other towers, and adorned with pinnacles. It is what is called a *sham* tower, built in all respects like other towers as to *one side*, but it is only a wall built in this shape, and added to a cottage for the sake of a view, from the poetical and picturesque terrace of an ancient Abbey. To take you to scenes with which you are better acquainted. I would ask you, what makes the venerable towers of Westminster Abbey, on the side of the Thames, more poetical, as objects, than the tower for the manufactory of *patent shot*, surrounded by the same scenery, and *towering* amidst the smoke of the city?

* The evening or morning has the same effect on this tower as any other; but describe it in poetry, you *must keep out of sight* that it is "*sham*," otherwise all poetical associations will be *lost*.

—See Letter to Lord Byron.

But, enough of this! I have read your observations with greater attention than you could have read mine; and having so read them, I must confess I do not find one point established against those positions which I had distinctly laid down, unless your observations may be called an answer, where, in refutation of such plain positions, you repeat yourself.

There is another circumstance, which almost persuades me you never read my criticism on POPE's Poetic Character. You say, "He glows
" with passion in the Epistle of Eloisa; and displays
" a lofty feeling, much *above* that of the satirist
" and man of the world, in his prologue to Cato,
" and his Epistle to Lord OXFORD."—*Campbell.*

This may be called an "answer!" how complete an answer it is, will be shewn by the following few lines of my criticism: "We regret that we have
" little more truly pathetic from his pen than the
" Epistle of Eloisa; and the Elegy to the unfortunate Lady; yet let me not forget one of the
" sweetest and most melodious of his pathetic effusions, the Address to Lord OXFORD,

"Such were the notes my once-lov'd Poet sung."

Bowles.

I must again entreat pardon for shewing what I did say of a poem founded on *manners*, and what I did *not* say of the Rape of the Lock. "In this
" composition POPE stands alone, unrivalled, and
" possibly never to be rivalled. All his successful

“labour of correct and musical versification, all
 “his talents of accurate description, though in an
 “inferior province of poetry, are here consum-
 “mately displayed; and as far as artificial life, that
 “is, ‘*manners*,’ not *PASSIONS*, are capable of being
 “rendered poetical, they are here rendered so by
 “the fancy, the propriety, the elegance, and the
 “poetic beauty of the machinery.”

Now I would put to you a few plain questions;
 and I would beseech you not to ask whether I *mean*
 this or that, for I think you must now understand
what I do mean. I would beseech you also not
 to write *beside* the *question*, but answer simply and
 plainly, whether you think that the sylph of POPE,
 “trembling over the fumes of a chocolate-pot,” be
 an image as poetical as that of delicate and quaint
 Ariel, who sings “Where the bee sucks, there
 “lurk I?” Or of the elves of SHAKESPEARE;

“——— Spirits of another sort,

“That with the morning light make sport.”

Whether you think the description of a game of
 cards be as *poetical*, supposing the execution in the
 artists equal, as a description of a WALK in a FOREST?
 Whether an age of refinement be as conducive to
 pictures of poetry, as a period less refined? Whe-
 ther passions, affections, &c. of the human heart be
 not a higher source of what is pathetic or sublime
 in poetry, than habits or manners, that apply only
 to artificial life? If you agree with me, I am

satisfied; if not, we differ, and always shall, on the principles of poetical *criticism*.

Your last observation is this: "I know not how to designate the possessor of such gifts, but by the name of a genuine poet." Nor do I, nor did I ever; and I will venture to assert, that if you examine well what I have here said on POPE's several writings, you will not think I ever shewed reluctance to attribute to him that high name.

Again. You say, "POPE's discrimination lies in the lights and shades of *human* manners, which are at least as interesting as *those of rocks and leaves!*" Does it require more than the commonest understanding to perceive the *fallacy* of this language.

I fear it would be thought impertinent to ask you at what University you acquired your logic; but I guess your knowledge of the art was not acquired at Oxford. Your logic is this: "*Human manners* are the province of poets;" therefore, "the *general and loftier passions* are not more poetical than *manners of artificial life*." Shall I hint further, that the expression *human manners* is vague and inapplicable. *Human manners* may designate equally the red Indian, in the forests of the Mississippi; the plumed soldier, and the grey-haired minstrel of chivalry; or Beau Nash, in a Bath ball-room. Every comedy, every farce, has *human manners*; but my proposition was confined

to *manners* of a *refined* age, which I called artificial; and which you have *artificially* slurred over with irrelevant expressions, that prove nothing. Artificial manners are *human*, but “*human manners*” ARE NOT SO ADAPTED TO POETRY OF THE HIGHEST KIND AS HUMAN PASSIONS.

I beg further to say, that there is not one passage, concerning the poetical beauties of which you have so justly spoken, which I have not expressly pointed out myself, as the reader may find in turning to the passages; particularly let him remember what I have said respecting the PATHOS, and the PICTURES, and the SOLEMN and SWEET HARMONIES, in the Epistle of Eloisa. And can I help pointing out, *not with triumph*, but with regret, that you only *agree with me* in some points, and that where we differ, your criticism conflictingly labours against your own argument: for when, nearly in the last sentence, you say, “he, POPE, *glows with passion*” “in the Eloisa, and displays a LOFTY feeling, much “ABOVE that of the SATIRIST and man of the world, “in his Prologue to Cato, and his Epistle to Lord “OXFORD;” what is that but to say, that “glowing “passions and *lofty feelings* are much ABOVE those “which distinguish the SATIRIST and man of the “world!!” Q. E. D.

AN
A D D R E S S

TO

THOMAS CAMPBELL, ESQ.

Editor of the New Monthly Magazine,

In Consequence of an Article in that Publication.

ADDRESSES

THOMAS CAMPBELL, ESQ.

Editor of the New Monthly Magazine

In consequence of an Article in that Magazine

To THOMAS CAMPBELL, Esq.

Bremhill, March 14, 1822,

DEAR SIR,

I Assure you it was only yesterday that I accidentally saw, in the Magazine, of which you are the Editor, an article professedly reviewing a pamphlet, in which a *late controversy* is spoken of. The article in the Magazine, if not written, which I can *hardly* suppose, by the Editor, has, at least, his sanction, and therefore is entitled to some notice.

1st. I am happy it is admitted that I spoke of "*passions*" in my definition of poetry.

Est quodam prodire tenus si non datur ultra.

No misunderstanding could have taken place, between me and yourself, if this had been originally admitted; because I could not have been represented as confining my views of poetry to Dutch pictures and inanimate landscapes.

2d. It being admitted that I had spoken of “*passions*,” and that you had represented me as omitting them, I am very willing that your representation of my sentiments shall not be called *misrepresentation*, if there be any other term.*

Whether the sentence in which “*passions*” are spoken of as “*derived*” from “*manners*,” be verbally accurate or not, the main drift of the argument is not affected by it ; which is, whether *art* or *nature*, *passions* or *manners*, are more susceptible of the highest poetical effects, or, in other words, “are more adapted to the highest orders of “*poetry*,” which is my proposition.

A *third* edition of the Letters to Lord BYRON being about to appear, I shall have an opportunity of making some further remarks respecting the sentiments which come under the sanction of Mr. CAMPBELL.

As to the writer reviewed in the New Monthly Magazine, to pass over the eternal *quibbles*, “*splitting hairs*” about *words* ; his writing “about it, Goddess, and about it ;” to pass over his “proving” what I never denied, and assuming what I never asserted ; his reasonings appear to me *ne plus ultra absurdities* in any man who can read and write.

* Mr. C. had originally quoted, but omitted to make any use of, Mr. BOWLES’s second position,

Third and lastly ; when he speaks of HOMER as introducing images from art, I would ask, "Te judice," whether those passages, through the whole of the Iliad or Odyssey, are *more* poetical, whose chief beauty depends on images from ART or NATURE ? Yes or no ? If you say, "the passages are *more* poetical that describe images from nature, and *passions*, than those that describe art, you AGREE with me !" Can you venture to say the contrary ?

I would ask you another question.

Why could not so great and poetical a genius as VIRGIL, have made his *top* as poetical as his JUPITER, (*media nimborum in nocte*,) if the sublimity of any object depended solely on the *genius* of the *describer* ?

Whatever verbal cavils may be made, I am quite sure the immoveable foundation of these principles cannot be shaken, either by yourself or Lord BYRON, if the question be met fully and fairly ; and after all, if you should succeed, you will destroy, not my principles, but the principles of common sense, the acknowledged foundation of all sound criticism, from LONGINUS to Dr. JOHNSON. It will be enough to say, that, looking to the authority of POPE himself, and to him alone, if these principles are not sound, the line of the Essay on Criticism, describing nature as

The source, the end, the test of art,

confusion as to

meaning of

nature

was meant by POPE as burlesque, and the “song” by a *person of quality*,

“NATURE must give way to ART,”

As serious;—which is *reductio ad absurdum*, or rather *absurdum per absurdum*.

Be assured I never was “*angry with you*.”—How *could* I be? You had never used the language of vulgar insult nor even incivility; you had unintentionally *omitted*, what I thought it necessary, in my definition of poetry, to lay down, and I thought it right to shew this; and you had spoken of *art*, without *reflecting*, apparently, that images from *art* in poetry, are rendered *more* poetical from their *moral* associations, or connection with the external beauties of nature.

I should certainly have thought it would have been more manly and generous in the Editor of the New Monthly Magazine, to have stated Lord BYRON’S arguments, and my answers, briefly but substantially,—or his own arguments, and *my answers*, and his own fair answers to *them*,—instead of tacking his opinions to *ex parte* statements of a writer, whose ingenuity consists chiefly in elaborate verbal cavils.

Now, my good Sir, it will not avail you to say, that no one object is *more poetical*, (that is, more adapted to poetry) than another; it signifies little to assert and build a baseless theory upon an

opinion, that I ever said "the *subject* of a poem constitutes its *merit more than the genius* of the "author;" it is unfair to affirm that I said *subject* was all, when I affirmed that *execution* must be taken into consideration. It is unjust to cavil on the words "taken into consideration," when it is clear from the context that the words imply "taken into consideration, before you can estimate the "rank of a poet in his art;" it won't do to cavil about the words sublime and poetical, when, if the subject be poetry, every one will know that the sublime, beautiful, or picturesque, or pathetic, must be applied to poetry. It won't do to say, that the sea, the sun, &c. have no sublimity in themselves, but that it depends on the treatment; for I then appeal to those who *have* best described them. It won't do to say they are nothing *in themselves*; for even by itself, without an adjunct, the *sea* is *more* poetical, (*more adapted* to poetry) than any *canal*. It won't do to affirm, or to pretend to "prove," that one subject is not more adapted to poetry than another; for then VIRGIL could have made his "*plough*," in the Georgic, as poetic, at least, as he has made his "*serpent*." It is of no use to talk of the "*no less exquisite performances* "of GENIUS in WORKS of ART, without defining what *that genius* is. It won't do to assert there is nothing sublime or beautiful in nature, abstractedly considered, when, tho' a bad poet like

BLACKMORE might undo "*Creation at a jerk*," yet the best poet could not make a "*mouse-trap*" sublime.

This appears to me the substance of the arguments which you think, as editor of a Magazine, CONVINCING!!

Now, my good Sir, ponder these things a little before you put forward your metaphysical coadjutor.

I owe to yourself to pay some more particular attention to arguments which I should otherwise think unworthy of notice.—In the first page it is said *mine* is a *new poetic* theory: Answer, it is as old as common sense. 2d page, it is said, "the creations and associations of poetry are addressed to the *imagination* and *feelings* alone."—Quere: how many of POPE's poems are addressed to the *imagination* and *feelings* alone?—Ibid: It is said "the influence of poetry is *confined* to the *heart* and *affections* alone!" Quere, How many of the poems of POPE are *confined* to the *heart* and *affections* alone?

This is quite enough for me, who ask only, and never did ask more, than THESE DATA; and upon these (for my opponents *blunder* in my favour, the first step, when they thought to destroy my theory,) DATA alone, I assert, MILTON and SHAKESPEARE are far greater Poets than POPE was, or ever could be, in his *line* of poetry.

In a most popular periodical publication, one of BLACKWOOD's clever wags says, "What can Lord BYRON and CAMPBELL mean, by saying art and "manners are as poetical as nature? It is all my "eye, Betty *Martin*!" Could the writer have in prophetic view, or what is called "second sight," this identical *Martinus secundus*? You probably might have heard, that the familiar expression is from an old hymn, "*Mihi Beate Martine !!*!"

As to making "the hog in the wind" a *sublime* object, neither Lord BYRON nor POPE could do it, any more than they could make, in the vulgar phrase, "a *silk purse of a sow's ear*!"* For yourself, I am sorry to be compelled to observe, that, by so ostentatiously bringing forward absurdities, and approving a mode of controversy you must despise, you appear to me to have added something like *intentional* insult to *unintentional* misrepresentation. Nevertheless, without the least feelings of "*anger*,"

I remain, dear Sir, &c.

W. L. BOWLES.

* A Cockney critic and poet, seeing a countryman going to a market-town behind the animals of which he had the charge, wrapt in the pastoral ideas of "*Arcadia*," put an eye-glass to his eye, and said to the countryman, "Friend, what *sheep* are "those?" "Sheep!" the man replied; "where dost *thee* come "from, not to know a *sheep* from a *pig*?"

I am afraid all the great geniusses of Cockney-land could not make a very poetical *pig-pastoral*, however they might succeed in "*sentimental*" and amorous *swans*, of which there is an affecting description in certain comical histories, called "*Romances*," by J. D'ISRAELI, Esq.

On the Question, whether, in Poetical Criticism, the "SUBJECT" of a Poem should be considered as well as the "EXECUTION."

THE words of Mr. CAMPBELL's Oracle, in his first page, (for we "must speak by the card, or "equivocation will ensue,") are these: "he trusts "that neither the REVOLUTIONS of EMPIRE, nor "the circumstances of literature, will ever lead "men to believe that the subject of a poem constitutes MORE of its poetical excellency than it "derives from the genius of the poet!"

But, reader, perpend—

In "the REVOLUTIONS of EMPIRE," who knows, but that (though the philosopher "TRUSTS" it never will be) my portentous propositions may be established; propositions so appalling, as that the sublime and beautiful in nature may be thought superior to *art*, and *passions* may be thought a groundwork of poetry more sure than manners!! What will become of this world, if ever these opinions should prevail? Even the Editor of the New Monthly, and the publisher, and the printer's devil, all aghast, might enter, crying out to the philosopher, whom they advocate,

"This day, oh! Mr. Doodle, is a day indeed!"

"A day we never saw before!!"

But what is the proposition, that this metaphysical Doodle trusts in the revolutions of empire will never take place! lest, "*horresco referens*," future generations may believe that the *subject* of a poem shall ever CONSTITUTE MORE of its EXCELLENCE than the GENIUS of the poet!! Take heart, poor man; as far as I am concerned you need not be in the least fear!! for my words are,—“ we
 “ might fall asleep over the Creation of BLACK-
 “ MORE, but be alive to the touches of anima-
 “ tion and satire in BOILEAU. The subject, there-
 “ fore, and execution, are equally to be considered;
 “ the one respecting the poetry, and the other
 “ the ART and POWERS of the poet.”—[Fifth paragraph of the observations on the Poetic Character of POPE.]

Now, as Mr. CAMPBELL is a man of veracity, I would wish him to ask his metaphysician, why, in a quotation from me, did he leave out the above words I have quoted, *stopping in the middle of the sentence*? Because he knew they stared him in the face, and told you what a “ lee that was,”* when he said I made no distinction between *the subject* and *manner of treating it*.

When the reader looks at my words he will think so too, and be convinced that they were omitted *purposely*. I will not say here, as in some other passages, *Oh! Te, Dermotte, cerebri!* but

* See that delectable History, “ Sir Andrew Wylic.”

ask, Where, in the words of that arch wag, FOOTE, do you think you shall *go when you die*, Martin? Further, if one subject be not, *per se*, more poetical than another, I would ask Mr. CAMPBELL's oracle this question, Which does his sapience suppose to be the finest subject for tragedy, Macbeth, or "a mouse-trap?" If you say the mouse-trap, the boys, as JOHNSON says, "would throw stones at you!" If you say that Macbeth, as a subject is, *per se*, more poetical than the other, we agree! You will reply, "Yes," but one man can write better on the subject of a *mouse-trap*, than the other on Macbeth! Good! So say I, *otherwise* BLACKMORE would be a greater poet than POPE!

Stop a minute, and do not leave out what I am going to add; "Suppose SHAKESPEARE himself had made a tragedy on the *mouse-trap*, executed as perfectly as such a pathetic subject of *transcendental art* could be executed by mortal poet, do you think it would be equally poetical as Macbeth?" Why not? Because the subject of one is "*more adapted to the highest orders of poetry*" than the other: so I think,

..... Nisi quid tu, docte Trebate,
Dissentis!

I have quoted a specimen of the veracity and ingenuity of this "wonderful" oracle of the New

• "What do you call the play?"

"The Mouse-trap!"

Hamlet.

"To be grave exceeds all power of face!"—*Pope.*

Monthly Magazine, from the *first page*; it is but right to shew what this gentleman has achieved, in his own opinion, *from the last page*! He has “*proved*,” he says, that there is not a *poetical object* in nature or art!! Proved he has not, and proved he never can; but suppose he has, has he proved *no one object* is more adapted, *per se*, to the highest orders of poetry than *another*, for that is my proposition? He has “*proved*,” also, that objects I have called *poetical* have no poetry, abstracted from the manner in which they are associated by the “*poet*.” Even this is not fairly stated: my position is, “*Images, &c. from nature are, per se, more poetical than any from art!*” Take this position as it is, and answer it if you can. Now, if this gentleman, who, coming forward “*for the first time*” so marvellously to illumine the New Monthly Magazine, had read a *little* more, and *wrote* a little less, and paid a *little* attention to the subject on which he was writing, he would then have found, by my own admissions, that what I had said *nullified* one half of his book, and *stultified* the other; and proved, on the whole, that, though he can *quibble*, he was as destitute of veracity as of *common sense*.

If ever this gentleman should begin to *read a little*, before he next sends his lucubrations into the world, though *considering* it is the *first time*, he is not the less “*wonderful*,” I could venture to

point out a passage, which I think he himself must pronounce highly *poetical*, as follows :

“ He was in logic a *great critic*,
 “ Profoundly skill'd in analytic;
 “ He could distinguish and divide
 “ A hair 'twixt south and south-west side:
 “ On either which he would dispute,
 “ *Confute*, change hands, and still *confute*;
 “ He'd undertake “ *to prove*,” by force
 “ Of argument, a man's no horse.
 “ All this, without a gloss or comment,
 “ He could unriddle in a moment,
 “ In proper terms such as men smatter,
 “ When they throw out, and MISS THE MATTER !”

But I must not here pass over one argument, quite new and convincing !!

This acute logician, quibbling on the word “ *poetical*,” asks, “ But if a man's wife be “ beautiful, should we therefore call her a poetical wife ?” A poetical *subject* we might; but Mr. BOWLES would not call a man's *wife poetical*, because she was *beautiful*; for this reason, if the word “ poetical,” in common *parlance*, be applied “ to *reading and writing animals*,” it would be understood to imply, that the writing or reading animal was addicted to *read or write poetry*, or scribble quibbling criticisms; but if the word *poetical* be applied, in the sense Mr. BOWLES constantly used it, to a *beautiful*, or picturesque object, or to *passions*, far more *poetical* than inanimate objects, in spite of Cockney logic, it would

mean that a landscape or tree, the beech that

“Wreaths its old fantastic roots so high,”

was poetical, being adapted to *poetical* description!

Admit it, therefore, to be true, that a beautiful woman would not be called “poetical, because she “was beautiful;” Mr. BOWLES has no hesitation to say, that even the “*proser*,” “*who penned a stanza when he should engross*,” might be called “poetical,” though he was as *ugly* as *Grimaldi*, wrote verses worse than TOM DUFFEY, and was so ignorant of the beauties of *external nature*, that he never saw even a *potatoe*, except in a wheelbarrow!

As I have mentioned the “nodding beech,” I must add that it is a fact, as may be seen in a *London* periodical publication, that the Cockney critic, not conceiving what GRAY could mean by a

“Tree that wreaths its roots so high!”

absolutely indulges his blithe disdain, by imagining “the tree to stand on its head.”*

If I shall be more particular in this than I intended, it may be excused, as I promise not to answer, or read, one word of this wonderful genius’s future lucubrations on the “sublime and beautiful.”

I would just request him, before he begins, to hear what an “old obsolete dunce,” called Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON, says of the “subject” of an epic poem, in the life of MILTON.

* The whole is signed “Calamus;” quere, *Quill Driver*?

PROOFS AND EXAMPLES.

Mr. CAMPBELL's *metaphysician* is too absurd, and too dishonest, to contend with. I shall therefore request Mr. CAMPBELL's attention to the following extracts, and ask, if he admit or deny the truth contained in them. In my opinion, the plain question respecting the "SUBJECT and EXECUTION" of a poem is resolved by them. Let us then hear Dr. JOHNSON:

"I am now to examine PARADISE LOST; a poem which, with respect to DESIGN, may CLAIM the FIRST PLACE, and, with respect to PERFORMANCE, the SECOND, among the productions of the human mind."
—Dr. Johnson.

I will next beg Mr. CAMPBELL to answer, plainly, if this poem claim the FIRST PLACE, with regard to *design*, and the SECOND with respect to performance, WHY it could be so pronounced? Nay, if MILTON had written *satires*, *moral poems*, *one* most exquisite and pathetic epistle, *one* most exquisite mock-heroic, whatever proofs these might be of his GENIUS, *pro tanto*, could he have been so pronounced, though the satires were the best the world ever saw? I will beg Mr. CAMPBELL to say Yes or No! If he deny what Dr. JOHNSON, and what most men of reflection

will say, I think he would find it difficult to prove a counter-position. If he agree with Dr. JOHNSON, the difference on this point between him and me is small indeed. I must come a little closer respecting "SUBJECT," and put Dr. JOHNSON *forward*.

"By the general consent of critics, the *first praise* of "GENIUS is due to the writer of an EPIC POEM; for it "requires an ASSEMBLAGE OF ALL THE POWERS, "which are singly sufficient for other compositions!!"—*Life of Milton*.

Is this good sense, or is it nonsense?

Again:

"The SUBJECT of an epic poem is naturally an "event of great importance. That of MILTON is not "the destruction of a city, or the foundation of an "empire: the SUBJECT is, the Fall of Worlds, the "Revolutions of Heaven, &c."—*Life of Milton*.

"Before the GREATNESS displayed by MILTON's "poem, all other GREATNESS shrinks away," &c.

"To display the motions and actions of BEINGS thus "superior, so far as human reason can examine them, "or human imagination represent them, is the task "which this MIGHTY POET has UNDERTAKEN and "PERFORMED!!"

I place before you these extracts from one whom, I think, as good a judge as *you* can produce. Are the positions sound? Yes, or no. If yes, can POPE, however exquisite his skill, in respect to any thing he has written, be ranked on the same "file" with this "*mighty*" poet? It is almost too absurd to ask the question. POPE's genius is granted, his talents are granted, his execution of what he has done puts this

beyond all doubt ; but his genius has never undertaken or performed a subject so adapted to the higher orders of poetry ; and his EXECUTION, if these premises be true, though consummate, will only place him eminent in his line ; and no more in the same walk with MILTON and SHAKESPEARE, than with him whose execution entitled him, among all poets that ever lived, to be pronounced THE FIRST among the lights of the human mind!!

Upon these premises I rest, as far as "*subject*" and *execution* are concerned. And I have only to add that those who, in their blind idolatry, wish to place POPE in the rank of SHAKESPEARE and MILTON, are the "bigots," and "*sectarists* ;"* not I, who wished only to appreciate, *not depreciate*, his distinctive and characteristic excellence.

* I cannot pass over the audacious falsehood of Mr. CAMPBELL's advocate, who can "*prove*" from my propositions, that THOMSON is as great a poet as SHAKESPEARE!! Whereas, I have constantly put all descriptive poetry *least* and *last* ; and "*passions*,"—passions, passions!! *first*. The only way to prevent, if any thing can in future, this audacious perversion, will be to print "*passions*" at the end of every sentence, when I am speaking of external nature.

*On Objects "Sublime and Beautiful" in
Nature, abstractedly.*

WHETHER there be sublime or beautiful objects in nature, *per se*, or not, (though it appears to me that none but the most metaphysically mad could think otherwise,) there can be no cavil, if I take my pictures from poetry, as to whether what is beautiful, or picturesque, or sublime, be poetical. We will open THEOCRITUS, for the book lies on my table.

Αδύ τι το ψιθυρισμα και α ποιος, αιπολε, τηνα,
Α ποτι ταις παγκαισι μελισσδελαι.

To say nothing of the music of these lines, we see the landscape, and hear, as it were, the very whisper of the pine hanging over the fountain; though another poet might, from want of taste, or from injudicious selection, or mean additions, even of these very objects make a contemptible daub by "imitating nature abominably;" yet, if the objects had not been picturesque, and so far *adapted* to poetry, THEOCRITUS could not have made the picture so beautiful; and therefore the objects are, *per se*, poetical. For if it were true, that this subject had *not* intrinsic poetry from nature, THEOCRITUS could have made the subsequent verses as *poetical* as these. Has he done so? No, he *could* not. All the

execution in the world could not make the next succeeding lines as poetical.

Every scholar, of any taste and feeling, involuntarily repeats the first passage with delight, and turns as involuntarily from the other. Why? Because the subject of the one is picturesque, and therefore so far poetical; the other is less so, and no *art* or genius in the poet could make it as poetically beautiful.

A lover of "*in-door nature*" who would say that there is nothing in the whole range of art, or of nature, *per se*, more poetical than another, might apply Ἀδύ τι το Ψυγισμα to the *kitchen bellows*, not omitting, in shining description, the *fire-tongs* and *shovel*: the genius with which these in-door implements, together with the gentle Ψιθυγισμα of the bellows were described, would probably make them, as poetry, *pari passu* with the landscape of THEOCRITUS, in his opinion!!

I assert, on the contrary, that whatever skill MAY BE EMPLOYED, *some subjects, described* by one and the same genius, will be *more poetical* than others, and all men will involuntarily confess it, *cum ventum ad verum est*.

HORACE says, (and I have at least such a *dunce* as HORACE on my side on more points than one,)

"Et quæ,

"DESPERAT TRACTATA NITESCERE, POSSE RELINQUIT:"

Further; if I were to go for an object, abstractedly poetical, from nature as given by this poet, I would transcribe one line only:

"Et præceps Anio, et Tiburni lucus.

The next line is

"Uda mobilibus Pomaria rivis."

Which of these three pictures are the most poetical,

“ Præceps Anio, Tiburni lucus ;”

or the last?

Every one, I think, would say the first ; because in the first the eye is fixed on the picturesque torrent of Anio, and the woods of Tivoli ; and in the other, to the small artificial rivulets by which the Pomaria were watered. But let us appeal to POPE himself. Who does not remember the celebrated simile paraphrased from HOMER :

“ As when the moon, &c.

“ O’er heav’n’s pure azure sheds, &c.”

Now granting, *argumenti causâ*, that the moon were, *per se*, no more poetical, that is, adapted to poetry, than a *green cheese*, (which is a *natural* object, an *artificial* object, an object of out-of-door nature, and in-door also ; and, as Lord BYRON might say, a “ *super-natural*,” “ *super-artificial*” object!) let it be the *green cheese* of POLYPHEMUS, laid by for his beloved GALATEA, could THEOCRITUS, could HOMER, have made a picture of it as poetical as the moon-light simile?

I was going to speak of “ *the sun*, in MILTON ;” of the stars, where “ *Hesperus rides brightest* ;” of the morn ; of evening ; but

Cynthius aurem vellet.

If what I have said cannot persuade even the most obtuse and blundering metaphysician, that there are some objects in nature *more adapted* to poetry, *per se*, than others ; and if this position be denied, that there are some objects in nature more describable, and which *have been* more exquisitely described, than any

works of art can be, though described by the greatest genius the world ever saw ;—if what I have said be not sufficient to prove this, *no examples* could ; and I must rest on these reasons, whether good or bad, for retaining that opinion myself, at least till I shall hear some much better arguments, to the contrary.

These quibbles about the word “ poetical,” which word, if it affect me, affects *Lord Byron also*, and in the same degree ; and the whole *elaborate nonsense*, which Mr. CAMPBELL calls “ an Answer,” is NULLIFIED in a moment, by only remembering that poetical is *adapted to poetry*.

Yet for the sake of my readers I will canvass some objections a little farther.—No great correspondent feeling is excited in the bare words *ocean, sun, planet, firmament*, because the mind is fixed chiefly on *the word*, as a noun substantive in grammar—*Musa, dominus, domus, cælum, mundus*. Something is added, if I say *dominus jussit, mundus patet, sol nitet*.

Still, the bare *word*, if it excite a moment's thought, excites ideas that are, and *must* be, *more* poetical than any images from art.

“ And GOD said, let there BE LIGHT, and there “ WAS LIGHT!!” This is sublime, and so thinks as great a critic as Mr. CAMPBELL's. But it could not have been so *poetically sublime*, if the object from which the image is derived, was not abstractedly capable of exciting sublime ideas *more poetical* than any object in works of art. The object is sublime in its magnificence, sublime in its relation to *power*, though such a poet as BLACKMORE could not describe it. One scene in landscape is more picturesque, adapted to painting,

than another, though a sign-post painter could not paint it.

If it be *action* that chiefly excites emotion, on which account I think it will appear that what LONGINUS calls “sublime,” ARISTOTLE with greater discrimination calls “energetic,”

Ενεργητικόν τι —

the object itself must be sublime, and as such adapted to poetry in the first instance. A thousand circumstances may be added to any poetical object to render it still more so by accumulation of accessory “images” that belong to it; thus

To behold the *wand’ring* moon,
Riding, near her highest noon,
 Like *one* that had been led astray,
 Through the heav’n’s wide pathless way.

Here are five or six *images*, all in *relation*, and all of the highest poetical interest, rendering more distinct, in action and in glory, *one object*, abstractedly poetical—far more adapted to poetry *than any object in art*. It is thus poetry paints! An object is not merely set before us, but being primarily *adapted to poetry*, it becomes *more* poetical, when it thus shines out amidst the galaxy of its glorious relations; whilst the mind follows with excited attention, and more profound delight.

Perhaps the *Canticle*, in our Common Prayer Book, would best shew the poetic sublimity of mere objects of nature upon the simplest scale, called into action.

Oh! ye sun and moon—*Praise ye the Lord.*

Oh! ye winds of GOD—*Praise ye, &c.*

Oh! ye winter and summer—*Praise ye, &c.*

Oh! ye seas and floods—*Praise ye, &c.*

I would merely ask, if any "*artificial*" object in the whole world could *sustain* a like *sublimity* with all these objects? "O ye cities and towns," for instance? Therefore some *objects* are more poetical (*adapted to poetry*) than others; and "what are sublime or beautiful in the works of nature, are *more poetical* than any works of art!" but *PASSIONS* are more poetical, that is to say, more adapted to the highest orders of poetry, than any visible object in nature or art.

Having taken up this slight examination, in deference to Mr. CAMPBELL, I shall go a step farther. The *SUN* and the *OCEAN*, we are told, are *not poetical* in themselves; as all poetry depends on the treatment alone!!

"I have introduced both these objects," the metaphysician proclaims aloud, "in the two following lines, and think you will hardly pronounce them *poetical*!"

"The *SUN* had risen before we left town;

"And we got within *sight* of the *OCEAN* about five o'clock."

Bravo! However, "the *SUN*" and "the *OCEAN*" are something, even here. But my position is, that what is sublime and beautiful in nature is *more* so than any thing in art: so, by your leave, if, for "*SUN* and "*OCEAN*," I put the artificial objects, a *cock'd-hat*, and the sign of the *Green Gander*, the sentence with the Ocean and Sun would be *more poetical* than the other.

I leave those to whom "*Nature*" is so mysterious, to say which even of these two sentences is most poetical!!

Let Mr. CAMPBELL's wonderful logician, who starts out thus powerful at once, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter, let him go yet higher :

"The *sun, stars, planets, and firmament,*

"Give *light* to the *ocean and earth!*"

He asks "if this be *poetical?*" Answer: *More poetical*, certainly, than

"The *wax-lights, the lustres, the sconces and the chandeliers,*

"Give *light* to the *ball-room!*"

*On Poetry derived from Passions; and Instances
in which what is sublime or pathetic may be
affected by unpoetical treatment.*

WE have hitherto been speaking only of visible objects of poetical sublimity in Nature. Though I point to my most material proposition, and say, "passions, passions, passions," are the soul of poetry, it is of no use! It is still asserted that I confine my ideas to *minute* descriptions of external nature! that THOMSON, according to my principles, is a greater poet than SHAKESPEARE!! I shall therefore say a few words concerning poetry derived from its highest source; and shall take the first examples which occur in the volume that contains the sublimest and most poetical images in the world.

"He bowed the heavens, also, and came down; and it
"was dark under his feet: he rode upon the cherubims,
"and did fly: he came flying on the wings of the wind."

It was not even in the power of STERNHOLD and HOPKINS to destroy the sublimity of this passage:

"The LORD descended from above,
"And bow'd the heavens most high;
"And underneath his feet he cast
"The darkness of the sky.
"On cherubs and on cherubim," &c.

Now let us take a poetical passage of the most pathetic kind:—"By the waters of Babylon we sat down and
"wept, when we remembered thee, oh! Sion."

With regard to the first of these passages, to shew how just is the general remark of HORACE,

“*Invenias etiam disjecti membra poetæ,*”

let the images be disjointed how they will, the images being sublime or magnificent in themselves, you cannot destroy them—you will still find, turning them into prose, the same materials of sublimity, the same *disjecti membra poetæ*. It is exactly the reverse with pathetic poetry. In the Psalm, “by the waters of “*Babylon*,” words the most simple, combined with the imagery, excite instantaneous feelings of sympathy.

Such being the sublimity and pathos of those two passages from scripture, let us set these performers, “*THOMAS STERNHOLD, JOHN HOPKINS, and others,*” to work on them. The first passage, as I have said, they could hardly do otherwise than render sublime, though they were themselves entirely unconscious of it. Now let us see what they can make of the *pathetic* verse which I have quoted from the Psalms!

“*When as we sat in Babylon,*

“*The rivers round about,*

“*All in remembrance of Sion,*

“*The tears for grief burst out !*

“*We hung our harps and instruments*

“*The willow trees upon ;*

“*For in this place, men, for their use,*

“*Had planted many a one !”*

Who does not instantly feel the lameness, the *dilutedness*, the scrannel impotence of the paraphrase?

If I were to adduce one incident more pathetic than another, in the whole world of writings, I should, perhaps, draw an example from the affecting story of “*JOSEPH and his brethren.*” The mind is worked up

to the most intense interest, when his brothers stand before JOSEPH, who is unknown to them. What is the first word he utters, after he has told them who he is? "I am Joseph your brother:" he stops not a moment for an answer, but instantly, and as scarce breathing, enquires, "Does my FATHER yet live? the OLD MAN, "of whom ye spake?" The slightest alteration of these words, so delicate is high-wrought sympathy, would instantly destroy the interest.

One distinction seems to me obvious: by *additions*, and those chiefly from *art*, a passage in which sublime objects occur may be made mean, as by COWLEY and BLACKMORE; though the objects themselves, abstractedly, cannot be made so. *Pathos* may be entirely destroyed by bad treatment, or even altering words; but I affirm, as will be shewn afterwards, that no *possible treatment* can make a really *unpoetical* image *poetical*, nor any image from art as sublime as images from nature, or manners as *poetical* as passions, provided the poet be adequate in genius, as MILTON and SHAKESPEARE were; and that, therefore, POPE can never be in the same line with these immortal poets, let his *execution* be what it may; never equal to them in *sublimity*, or in *pathos*; never equally master of our *hearts*; and though equalling in *execution*, *pro tanto*, (all his works being considered,) never even *approaching* them in the vastness, richness, copiousness, or affecting beauties, of their several creations.

I have placed, in consequence of the consummate *execution* of his Eloisa, and Rape of the Lock, POPE before DRYDEN. But if the "*Flower and the Leaf*" of DRYDEN had been original, this exquisite work of

fancy and execution would have weighed down the Rape of the Lock; but in consequence of this unique, original, and exquisite performance, the Rape of the Lock, and the most finished and passionate Epistle of Eloisa, infinitely superior to any thing of the kind extant, I have ventured to place POPE above DRYDEN, notwithstanding the superiority of DRYDEN's Ode. And yet, with this printed and published decision, I am held up as considering that he who could write a "sonnet to a lap-dog, a greater poet than POPE." See a publication called "The Speculum!"

Such is the periodical press in the year 1822!! Some writers, having been beat out of asserting that I called "POPE no great poet," turn round and say, if I allow his exquisite Eloisa to be so pathetic, and pathos to be one of the great characteristicks of the higher orders of poetry, why not place him with SHAKESPEARE? Because "one swallow does not make a summer:" and *what* comparison is there between Eloisa and Lear?

VIRGIL'S GEORGICS; and whether what is mean,
per se, can be rendered poetical by any art of
 the Poet.

Mr. CAMPBELL, in the New Monthly Magazine, professes to call the arguments I have examined, an answer to me!! This luminous coadjutor of Mr. CAMPBELL has "proved" that the most insignificant creatures, swarming bees, may, in the hands of Virgil, become *sublime*, the whole poetical sublimity, or beauty, depending upon the describer!! As he adduces the very respectable authority of such a scholar as Mr. KNIGHT, I shall be more particular.

All creatures that *fly*, may, I think, as I have before observed, be generally pronounced poetical. How exquisitely has Spencer set before us the clown brushing away the flies on a summer evening! It is the air, the flowers, herbs, the broken hum in the sunshine, that make these objects poetical; as the wild rocks—the daring flight—the eye of fire—make the "*fulminis alitem*," the most poetically sublime among birds.

It may be further observed, that birds become more poetical according to the places where they chiefly inhabit, associated feelings, &c. Hence, rock birds, sea-birds, birds of the desert, are poetical; in the solitary woodland, Philomel sings

"Most musical, most melancholy;"
 and VIRGIL as beautifully describes the murmurs of the wild dove on the elm,

"Nec gemere aëria cessabit turtur ab ulmo."

All these circumstances enhance the poetical interest. The cuckoo is associated with spring; the vulture with rocks and tempests; the redbreast with the sacred associations of the dead,—

“ The Redbreast oft, at evening hours,
 “ Shall kindly lend its little aid,
 “ With scatter’d moss and gather’d flow’rs,
 “ To deck the ground where thou art laid.”

Why is this last picture so affecting? because it is strongly and beautifully connected with human sympathy. The observation leads to an infinitude of examples, independent of the flowers, the air, the sunshine, the beautiful forms which birds possess. But let me turn from these poetical objects to a toad in a garden! Who can make a *sublime*, pathetic, or beautiful toad? Though such an object might be in sympathy with *certain characters* that shall be *nameless*, who can make a toad poetical? You must connect with it feelings of dislike and aversion:

“ *Squāt at the ear of Eve, familiar toad.*” MILTON.

..... “ Familiar toad,
 “ Half froth, half venom, spits itself abroad.” POPE.

If these images be introduced, it is to excite aversion; but the sympathy with what is great, or delightful, or beautiful, is the foundation of the *higher orders* of poetry.

VIRGIL could not make a *harrow* as poetical as a waterfall, or dignify that unpoetical reptile which, in a garden, better associates itself with the ideas of a CRITIC than with poetry, as the *Editor of the Quarterly Review* has once happily observed, in his answer

to the Critical Review, on his admirable translation of
JUVENAL!!!

There are two characters who constantly cry out,
"Away with this cant about Nature!!" One sees with
more delight

"The flambeaux flash against the morning skies,"
than the sun

"Firing the red top of the eastern pines."

The *other*, who cries, "Away with this *cant* about Na-
ture!" is the critic who, probably, never saw any thing
higher than St. Paul's; who writes of blue Italian skies,
and gardens of roses, though he never saw a sky but
through smoke, or a rose but in the spout of a china
teapot! "AWAY with the cant about NATURE!" is
as natural to such characters as the *wonderment* ex-
pressed about "general nature, external nature," by a
critic, whose ideas in poetry are, probably, confined
to the sublime and magnificent in a London square,
or blandishments of "erotic" swans! Such characters
are thus described by the Satirist:

"He, with an awkward briskness, not his own,
"TRIUMPHANT seem'd, when that strange savage Dame,
"Known but to few, and only known by NAME,
"Plain COMMON SENSE, appear'd, by NATURE there
"Appointed, with plain Truth, to guard the chair.
"The Arch-Cockney saw, and, blasted with a frown,
"To his first state of nothing melted down."

Churchill.

A little acquaintance with "this strange SAVAGE
"DAME," and no less strange thing, called Nature,
would be of great service to some metaphysicians, as
well as poets.

To return to the "*sublime*" insects! If they fly,* they are *poetical*. Take even the beetle:

"Save where the beetle wheels his drony flight." *Gray*.

"Against the traveller borne in heedless hum." *Collins*.

Reptiles exciting *terror* for that reason may be made highly *poetical*. So in VIRGIL's *Georgics*:

"Postquam exusta palus, terræque ardore dehiscunt:

"Exilit in siccum, et flammantia lumina torquens

"Sævit agris."

Again,

"Cum positis novus exuviis nitidusque juvena

"Volvitur, aut catulos tectis aut ova relinquens,

"Arduus ad solem et linguis micat ora trisulcis."

But no "*treatment*" can make the bee "*sublime*!" Poetic sublimity is not its character, but poetic *beauty* is: and first, let the "most sluggish of the Dunciad tribe" answer, is a bee a *natural* or *artificial* object?

"Ergo, ubi ver nactæ sudum camposque patentés

"Erumpunt portis, concurritur; æthere in alto

"Fit sonitus, magnum mixtæ glomerantur in orbem,

"Præcípites cadunt. Non densior aëre grando,

"Nec de concussa tantum pluit ilico glandis."

This is *beautiful*,—*inest sua gratia* PARVIS;—but all the poets in the world cannot make the imagery *sublime*. It is beautiful by nature; a consummate poet avails himself of that *beauty*; so THEOCRITUS,

* It is said that I should prefer "FLYING" with supreme domination!" I should prefer "SAILING!" for, if the artificer made the *sails*, he did not make "the *winds*!"

Ὡδε καλὸν δομᾶντι ποτὶ σμανεσσὶ μελισσαι. . .

Πωτῶντο ξεῖδαι περὶ πίδακας ἀμφὶ μελισσαι.

And observe, in the passage from the Georgics, the images from *nature*! “*Ver sudum—campos patentes*” —*æthere in alto*,” &c. &c. From his vagrant labours, his life among the flowers, in the sunshine of spring, over the fields, or when

“With early wing,

“He murmurs the blossom’d trees among;”

from his airy hum, his rich colours in the light, the bee is peculiarly poetical, and its introduction accompanied necessarily with poetical circumstances. VIRGIL, therefore, could give a poetical interest to bees, and even to the snake! Could he do so to the *instrument of art*, employed more especially upon the subject of his poem,—the plough, or any of its *artificial* accessories? Let the reader see.

“Curvi formam accipit ulmus aratri;

“Huic a stirpe pedes temo protentus in octo,

“Binæ aures, duplici aptantur dentalia dorso.”

Nay, with all the poetry VIRGIL has thrown on his subject, and that poetry from *nature*, (as POPE has done in his Essay on Man,) the Georgics would have lost their most unperishable charm, if he had not shewn in his poem the “*dulcia*” as well as the “*pulchra*,” by the exquisite episode of ORPHEUS, &c.

“Ipse cava solans ægrum testudine amorem,

“Te, dulcis conjux, te solo in littore secum,

“Te veniente die, te decedente canebat.

“Tænarias etiam fauces, alta ostia Ditis,

“Et caligantem nigra formidine lucum

“Ingressus.”

Who does not almost involuntarily repeat the rest to

“Heu non tua, palmas !

“Dixit, et ex oculis subito, ceu fumus in auras,” &c.

Need I mention, in farther illustration of the necessity of such interspersions in such a work, Aristæus descending into the Deep to see his mother the Sea-Nymph—

“Jamque domum mirans genetricis, et humida regna,

“Speluncisque lacus clausos, lucosque sonantes,

“Ibat, et, ingenti motu stupefactus aquarum.”

Who that reads these passages cares one farthing about the *lætæ segetes*, and the plough? and who does not see the art of the poet? and who does not know it is these images from NATURE, from *external* nature and PASSIONS, that make the Georgics, whatever they may be as a treatise on agriculture, ETERNAL AS A POEM?

The only part of the heap of blunders that Mr. CAMPBELL has *puffed*, which has the least claim to any attention from a sensible man, is that taken from Mr. KNIGHT; and which, on that account, I have examined with more respectful attention.

POSTSCRIPT.

AS what I have stated in some part of these pages might not be believed without proof, I transcribe literally two passages, one from my Observations, and the other from a Letter to me, by which the reader will see the shifts to which such opponents are reduced.

Passage from my Edition of POPE.

“ Let me not be considered as thinking that THE
“ SUBJECT ALONE constitutes poetical excellency, the
“ execution is to be taken into consideration at the same
“ time, for we might fall asleep over the CREATION
“ of BLACKMORE, but be alive to the touches of ani-
“ mation and satire in BOILEAU !”—BOWLES.

“ I am aware that *you affect* to assign a *part* of it to
“ execution! Let me not, however, you say, be con-
“ sidered as thinking that the subject constitutes poetical
“ excellency! Here you seem (as usual) to have *studied*
“ AMBIGUITY OF EXPRESSION.”—MAC DERMOT,
page 44.

The latter limb of the sentence, which puts the meaning out of doubt, is omitted. A full stop is put in the middle of the sentence, for no other reason than that it should appear *ambiguous*; and then I am boldly accused of purposed ambiguity!!! No reader could believe this, if he had not seen it! and I leave it to speak for itself.

The whole of what this logician "HAS PROVED" is thus summed up:

"I have PROVED that there is nothing poetical in the works of nature or art! I have proved that the objects you *call* poetical have no poetry, abstracted from the manner in which they are associated by the poet; and that where the manner is not poetical, the description will be prosaic, however richly it may be sown with your poetical images; and that consequently in all cases it is the manner alone that constitutes poetical pre-eminence."—Page last.

The first is not "*proved*," nor can be "*proved*," unless it can be "*proved*" that no one object is more adapted to poetry than another;—adapted to poetry, being my definition of poetical; bearing the same relation to poetry that picturesque does to painting.

To the second:—I refer my reader to the example of BLACKMORE and BOILEAU, which this opponent has designedly omitted.

To the third:—I deny, if by "*treatment alone*" it be inferred, that the most successful "*treatment*" of epistles, or satires, places a poet in the same file as the most successful "*treatment*" of an epic poem.

This is the logician's own SUMMARY! the rest is confusion worse confounded, quibbles, word-catching, blunders, and fraud, as far as I can comprehend him. He quotes the lines,

"He who would see Melrose aright,
Must see it by the *pale moon-light*!"

He quotes COLLINS's Ode to *Fear*!! as if he had never heard that tragedy was founded on *terror* and pity, and as if "*fear*" was not a passion!

I here leave Mr. M'DERMOT!

Having given this summary of the answer to me, I will conclude by giving a summary of my principles, to which this affects to be an answer :

1. That there are some objects, both in nature and art, more poetical, that is, more adapted to poetry, than others.

2. That those most adapted will be found among the greatest objects in nature.

3. That, as in external nature there exist objects more susceptible of poetry than others, from their beauty, picturesque appearance, ideas excited by the contemplation of power, &c. &c.; so are the higher passions of the heart, including all that affects the imagination, more adapted to poetry than the manners and habits of any particular period.

4. That the subject, whether of an epic poem, or tragedy, or moral epistles, or satire, must be taken into consideration, before the rank of a poet in his art can be determined, let his execution, in that rank, be what it may.

5. That, be the subject what it may, it must so far depend on the execution, that he who executes, *as well as possible*, a poem on any subject, would be a better poet than he would be, whose subject was an epic, in which the execution entirely failed.

6. That if of three poets, one had executed an epic poem, another a tragedy, and the third a most pathetic epistle, *one* work of exquisite imagination in mock-heroic, with satires, &c.; and that these three poets had executed their several descriptions of poetry with the same perfection, viz. an epic poem, a tragedy, an ode or epistle, or a mock-heroic, or moral essays, or

satires ; that then, those who had so executed works like *Paradise Lost*, or dramas like *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Tempest*, *As you like it*, &c. would, from the nature of the subjects, and equal execution, according to my principles, and the principles in criticism generally admitted and acknowledged, be pronounced the greatest poets ; and, therefore, that **POPE**, with all his execution, never could be placed in the same rank with **MILTON** and **SHAKESPEARE**.*

These are the deductions from my principles, which neither **LORD BYRON** nor **Mr. CAMPBELL** have answered.

* So far from depreciating **POPE**, I believe I am the only writer who would place, and who has placed, him above **DRYDEN** ! As to **Mr. M'DERMOT**'s reasonings, they appear to me such as could only be met by ridicule. I should not, indeed, have said a word that looked like disrespect, if he, as well as the Critic in the *Quarterly Review*, had not used the language of personal flippancies towards me. But, in return for the kindness expressed by him, that, instructed by him, I may remove from the ranks of those " who write dull receipts how poems may be " made " (which I have not done) ; I hope, under the hasty examination which his Letter to me has undergone, " HE may " REMOVE " from the ranks of carping verbal hypercritics, to become a critic with larger and more liberal views, to scorn disingenuous perversions, and to use no language, *unprovoked*, which may be thought inconsistent with the character of a fair critic, a candid man, or a liberal scholar.

no
Wardens

Method

AN
ANSWER
TO A
Writer in the Quarterly Review,

MAINTAINING,

THAT "IN-DOOR NATURE" IS AS POETICAL AS THE
MAGNIFICENCE OF THE CREATION;

AND

*That exquisite Delineations of Manners entitle a Poet
to rank as high in his Art, as exquisite Delineations
of the Passions of Nature.*

Non si te ruperis, inquam,
Par erit.

HORACE.

It will be observed, that in Lord BYRON's argument little was said respecting the character of POPE as a Poet; it was a mere literary discussion, evidently in part badinage, by Lord BYRON, to prove, in the disdainful loftiness of genius, that he could make black white. It would hardly have required an answer, had not so many unreflecting people deemed it conclusive. In the criticism of the Writer in the Quarterly Review, all is serious and elaborate; and it is so far more difficult to answer, as

"Your true no-meaning puzzles more than wit."

The substance of the Answer, as far as poetical criticism is concerned, I have here added, that the reader may form his opinion.

AN
ANSWER, &c.

DR. WARTON had declared, or, according to the Quarterly Reviewer, had the “MERIT of first declaring of POPE, that he did not think him at the head of his profession, and that his *species of poetry* was not the most excellent *one* of the art.”

This is WARTON’s opinion, and this is mine; and this opinion I have supported in the Principles of Poetry; and this opinion I think I can easily defend (though I believe that so *defined* it will be generally admitted) against Dr. JOHNSON, Mr. CAMPBELL, and the Quarterly Reviewer. But first for Dr. JOHNSON. What says the Doctor?

“To circumscribe poetry by a definition will only show the narrowness of the definer.” “If POPE be not a poet, where is poetry to be found?”

He might as well have said, "If the LARK be not "a *singing bird*, where is a *singing bird* to be "found?" Such is the Doctor's logic!

"Aye! but such a definer," adds the critic, "arose in the disciple of WARTON, the Rev. W. "L. BOWLES, who has distinguished himself in "this IDLE controversy." Now, such a *definer* did not arise in W. L. B. He was not so absurd as to attempt "circumscribing" poetry to ONE species, and to that ONE SPECIES ALONE! He never thought, and never implied he thought, that POPE was not a poet, or that any definition would exclude him from a most high order; but, when vague claims were made, as they now are, respecting his absolute supremacy in the art—not his line of art—the Rev. W. L. BOWLES thought, and does think, *not* that POPE was not a poet, a poet the most finished and most excellent in his order; but that his order was not the highest in poetry; whilst HOMER, and SHAKESPEARE, and MILTON remain.

And he must here also observe, that he did not enter into this "idle controversy" voluntarily, but was forced into it by total misrepresentation.

I proceed to consider the other authority which this critic advances, namely, that of Mr. CAMPBELL.

The sentence in which the authority of his name is produced is this:

“ Mr. BOWLES opens his observations on the poetic character of POPE, with two regular propositions: that IMAGES drawn from what is SUBLIME OR BEAUTIFUL in Nature are MORE poetical than images drawn from art; and that passions are more adapted to poetry than manners.”

This is my proposition, which I think substantially unanswerable. I had said I was obliged to the writer for being so far fair, *in this one instance*, as not to leave out the latter part of the sentence!! But the writer did not do so; he *falsified the passage on purpose*, leaving out *artificial!*” *Hæ tibi erunt artes!* Nevertheless, I take it as it is. This is my position, and I think it unanswered and unanswerable.

For the sake of clearness, I shall re-state the grounds of my opinions.

“ All images drawn from what is BEAUTIFUL or SUBLIME in the WORKS of NATURE, are *more* beautiful and sublime than any images drawn from art,* and they are, therefore, *per se*, (abstractedly,) more poetical! In like manner, those PASSIONS of the human heart, which belong to NATURE in general, are *per se* more adapted to the higher species of poetry than INCIDENTAL and transient manners!”

I have not Mr. CAMPBELL’S Specimens at hand, and as I am now answering the critic in the Quar-

* This is an axiom, not a “theory.”

terly Review who brings the passage against me, I must take the words before me.

“ Mr. CAMPBELL judges, that the *exquisite* description of artificial objects and manners is NOT LESS CHARACTERISTIC of GENIUS than the description of *simple physical appearances!*”

In the first place, CAMPBELL overlooked entirely what I had made the chief principle of poetry, taking his opinions at second-hand from the Edinburgh Review. The critic here confines himself to the *first part* of my proposition. Instead of answering even this part, he says, the “exquisite description” of works of art is not less characteristic of genius than descriptions of *simple PHYSICAL APPEARANCES!* Doubtless! but one half, and that the most essential, of my proposition is entirely omitted, and the other half mistaken. Why not take the plain words of the two propositions, and answer “negatur?”

Without talking of “exquisite description” of art as “characteristic of genius,” will any one deny, that “images, drawn from what is SUBLIME “or BEAUTIFUL in the WORKS of NATURE, are “MORE beautiful and sublime than any images “drawn from art, and therefore, *per se*, *abstractedly*, MORE POETICAL?” Will this critic deny it? Then, why confound the proposition, by talking of “characteristics of genius,” and that

genius indefinite? Doubtless! because Mr. CAMPBELL must define what he means by genius. COWLEY had as much *genius* as MILTON, but not for the highest orders of poetry.

I used the words *per se, designedly*, to shew that, let works of art be as sublime or beautiful as they might, images drawn from what is SUBLIME or BEAUTIFUL in NATURE, that is, from the great and beautiful works of the Almighty, are MORE so, and therefore more poetical, more adapted to poetry.

What would be the most exquisite description of Mr. CAMPBELL's ship, *abstractedly*, as a poetical object, in comparison with the description of the same ship, in conjunction with the elements of nature? This I have shewn; nor have I said any thing as to the point whether the "*exquisite description*" of this object or of that is "most characteristic of genius!" I spoke of the invariable principles of poetry. An "*exquisite*" painting on a snuff-box may be, for aught I have said to the contrary, characteristic of genius, so far as *exquisite skill* goes, in that line; but the most exquisite skill in that line cannot make a painter so eminent in all that relates to the higher orders of his art, as the Cartoons conceived by the genius, and EXECUTED by the hand, of a RAPHAEL!

I turn from Dr. JOHNSON and Mr. CAMPBELL to my critic. I will shew more fairness to him

than he has shewn to me, by transcribing, word for word, not “ splitting sentences,” the whole *luminous* passage in which he displays so *triumphantly* his consummate analytical powers of philosophy and criticism.

“ It is clear to us that a theory, which frequently admitting every thing the votary of POPE could desire, to substantiate the high genius of his master, yet terminates in excluding the poet from ‘ the highest order of ‘ poets,’ must involve some *fallacy*; and this we presume we have discovered in the absurd attempt to raise ‘ a *criterion* of poetical talents.’ Such an *artificial test* is repugnant to the man of taste who can take enlarged views, and to the experience of the *true critic*. In the contrast of human tempers and habits, in the changes of circumstances in society, and the consequent mutations of tastes, the objects of poetry may be different in different periods; pre-eminent genius obtains its purpose by its adaptation to this eternal variety; and on this principle, if we would justly appreciate the creative faculty, we cannot see why POPE should not class, at least in file, with DANTE or MILTON. It is probable that POPE could not have produced an ‘ *Inferno*,’ or a ‘ *Paradise Lost*,’ for his invention was elsewhere: but it is equally probable that DANTE and MILTON, with their cast of mind, could not have so exquisitely touched the refined gaiety of ‘ the *Rape of the Lock*.’

“ It has frequently been attempted to raise up such arbitrary standards and such narrowing theories of art; and these ‘ *criteria*’ and ‘ *invariable principles*’

have usually been drawn from the habitual practices and individual tastes of the framers; they are a sort of concealed egotism, a stratagem of self-love. When Mr. BOWLES informs us that one of the *essential* qualities of a poet 'is to have *an eye attentive to and familiar with* (for so he strengthens his canons of criticism) 'every 'external appearance of nature, every change of 'season, every variation of light and shade, every 'rock, every tree, every leaf, every diversity of hue, ' &c. ;' we all know who the poet is that Mr. BOWLES so fondly describes.* 'Here, POPE,' he adds, 'from 'infirmities and from physical causes, was particularly 'deficient.' In *artificial* life, 'he perfectly succeeded; how minute in his description when he 'describes what he is master of! for instance, the game 'of ombre in the Rape of the Lock.—If he had been 'gifted with the same powers of observing *outward nature*, I have no doubt he would have exhibited as 'much accuracy in describing the appropriate beauties 'of the forest where he lived, as he was able to describe 'in a manner so novel, and in colours so vivid, a game of 'cards.' It happened, however, that POPE preferred *in-door* to *out-door* nature; but did this require inferior skill, or less of the creative faculty, than Mr. BOWLES's *Nature*? In POPE's *artificial life* we discover a great deal of *nature*; and in Mr. BOWLES's *nature*, or poetry, we find much that is *artificial*. On this absurd principle of definition and criterion, Mr. WORDSWORTH, who is often by genius so true a poet, is by

* In this passage I had in view only *descriptive* poets, particularly THOMPSON and COWPER! so that there was no "concealed egotism" in the matter.

his theory so mistaken a one. DARWIN, too, ascertained that "the invariable principle of poetry," or, in his own words, 'the essence of poetry,' was picture. This was a convenient principle for one whose solitary talent lay in the minute pencillings of his descriptions; and the idea was instantly adopted as being so consonant to nature, and to Alderman BOYDELL, that our authors now asserted, that if the excellence of a poem consisted in forming a picture, the more perfect poetry would be painting itself:—in consequence of this 'invariable principle of poetry,' Mr. SHEE, in his brilliant 'Rhymes on Art,' declared, that 'the *narrative of an action*' is not comparable to the '*action itself before the eyes*;' and BARRY ardently exclaimed, 'that painting is poetry realised!' To detract from what itself is excellent, by parallels with another species of excellence, or by trying it by some arbitrary criterion, will ever terminate, as here, in false criticism and absurd depreciation."—*Quarterly Review*.

I beg the reader attentively to peruse this passage, which is so *luminous*, in comparison of my "mystic dreams," and which exhibits such powers of logical and accurate discrimination. I might say, as CHILLINGWORTH did, when he heard that KNOX, the Jesuit, was engaged in controversy against him,

Si Pergama dextra

Defendi possent, etiam hac defensa videbo!

I have already set before the reader the whole of my positions, which he has garbled. And

first, I would ask any one, who compares my general passage with that in the Quarterly, to say, *bona fide*, which he thinks the most obscure? Any one, in half a moment, could perceive that, in speaking of the "execution" of a poem, I spoke figuratively, having taken the expressions "subject" and "execution" metaphorically, from the art of painting. I will not insult the reader's understanding by supposing he is ignorant of the meaning of the terms employed to define "execution." The words are familiar to every artist, and almost to every common reader. Need I say what is the *execution* of a poem?—The whole performance. The disposition?—The distribution of the several parts. The contrast of light and shade, the effect produced by opposing one part to another, relief, light and shade, contrast, colours of expression, animation, &c. are all taken figuratively from one and "the same art," painting, and are common expressions of criticism. See JOHNSON, POPE, &c.

And now to apply to the *logic* before us:—

"It is CLEAR to us, that a *theory*, which frequently admitting every thing the votary of POPE could desire, to *substantiate the high genius* of his master, yet *terminates* in excluding the poet from 'the *highest order of poets*,' must 'involve some fallacy!' Which commencement seems to imply, that if a poet is admitted to be of a very high order, he must therefore necessarily be

also of the "HIGHEST ORDER!" But the logician's sagacity is not long before it begins to perceive the "*fallacy!*" "And this we presume we have DISCOVERED in the absurd attempt to RAISE A CRITERION OF POETICAL TALENTS."

My "criterion" went only to ascertain the rank in poetry, to which the successful execution of an epic poem, a tragedy, or satire, severally entitled the authors. If SHAKESPEARE had written satire, equal, in execution, as satire, even to Macbeth, would he have been so great a poet? The question answers itself.

As I have never said any thing about "criterion," farther than concerned the "*execution*" of a poem, I presume the critic is not a jot nearer discovering the fallacy, if fallacy there be, than he was before!

From the "fallacy," which the critic presumes he has discovered, he goes on rapidly. "Such an artificial test is repugnant to the man of taste, who can take ENLARGED views, as to the experience of the TRUE CRITIC!"—*Quarterly Review*.

The "theory," of which this "TRUE CRITIC" has found the *fallacy*, next becomes an "artificial test;" and now the "fallacy" and "artificial test" are thus summarily and satisfactorily proved, by those who have "such enlarged views!"

Reader,

"Attentis auribus adsta!"

“ In the *contrast of human tempers and habits*,
 “ in the *changes of circumstances in society*, and
 “ the consequent MUTATION OF TASTES, the OB-
 “ JECTS of poetry MAY BE DIFFERENT in *different*
 “ *periods !*” Indeed !

I marvel, then, what could have made HOMER the ETERNAL FATHER OF POETRY, amidst all contrast of human tempers and habits, in all changes of society, in all mutations of taste. But we must not interrupt the now rapidly running stream of this frothy and shallow sophistry.

Contrast of “ tempers and habits, changes of “ circumstances in society, mutation of tastes !” These, *not* passions, imaginations, affections, are the most sublime and beautiful objects of poetry, and these are all *changeable*, as changes of society, and mutation of “ taste,” operate ! “ Pre-eminent “ genius,” we are told, “ attains its purpose by its adaptation to “ this eternal variety ;” (the eternal variety of *habits, tastes, &c.*) and now for “ *quod erat demonstrandum ;*” thus, my “ fallacy” being overturned, the opposite principles being readily granted—that the objects of poetry are *mutable*, not *eternal*, as *mutable* as “ *habits and fashions,*” then we jump to the conclusion, which thus instantaneously follows ! “ On this *principle*, if we “ would JUSTLY APPRECIATE the *creative faculty*, “ WE CANNOT see why POPE should not class, at

“least in file, with DANTE and MILTON!”—
Quarterly Review.

“We deem this matter well made out,” said “John the Saint,” to “Mat,” in PRIOR’s witty fable of “Erle Robert’s Mice!” and if our readers think it as well “made out” by such “fallacies” as these, and such baseless arguments, *à la bonne heure!*

In the mean time, not to impede the career of this “true” critic’s triumph, let us see what follows.

“It is PROBABLE POPE could not have produced “an Inferno, or Paradise Lost.” (Probably not :) “for his invention lay elsewhere:” (undoubtedly, and among subjects less poetical; but) it “is “equally probable that MILTON and DANTE “could not have so exquisitely touched the refined “gaiety of the Rape of the Lock!” Probably not; but *Dii boni*, what a discovery! who would have surmised, that MILTON and DANTE, WITH THEIR CAST of MIND, could not so exquisitely have touched the refined gaiety of the “Rape of the Lock!” Therefore, is POPE of “the same file “with MILTON and DANTE!”

Even for this last thought the writer is indebted to one, whose criticism he holds so cheap; though I should never have thought of applying the observation as is here done, that because MILTON could not write the Rape of the Lock, and POPE could

not write *Paradise Lost*, *one* poet was in the same file with the *other*!

Merely to shew that some great critics may borrow of those "whose principles" they affect to despise, I extract a note to POPE's *Rape of the Lock*, from the last edition.

"This poem is founded, however, upon local manners, and of all poems of that kind it is undoubtedly far the best; whether we consider the exquisite tone of railery, the musical sweetness, &c. of the versification, the management of the story, or the kind of fancy and airiness given to the whole: but what entitles it to its high claim of peculiar poetic excellencies?—The powers of imagination, and the felicity of invention, displayed in adopting, and most artfully conducting, a *machinery* so fanciful, so appropriate, so novel, and so poetical. The introduction of Discord, &c. as machinery in the *Lutrin*, is not to be mentioned at the same time. Such a being as Discord will suit a hundred subjects; but the elegant, the airy sylph,

- ' Loose to the wind whose airy garments flew,
- ' Thin glittering textures of the filmy dew,
- ' Dipt in the richest tincture of the skies,
- ' Where light disports, in ever mingling dyes;

Such a being as this is suited alone to the identical and peculiar poem in which it is employed. I will now go a step farther in appreciating the elegance and beauty of this poem; and I would ask the question,—Let any other poet, DRYDEN, WALLER, COWLEY, or GRAY, *be assigned* this subject, and this *machinery*: could they have produced a work *altogether so correct*

and *beautiful*, from the same given materials? Let us, however, still remember, that this poem is founded on *local manners*, and the employment of the sylphs is in *artificial life*; for this reason the poem must have a secondary rank, when considered strictly and truly with regard to its poetry. Whether POPE would have excelled as much in loftier subjects, of a general nature, in the high mood of *Lycidas*, the rich colourings of *Comus*, and the magnificent descriptions and sublime images of *Paradise Lost*? or in painting the characters and employments of aerial beings,

‘That tread the ouse of the salt deep,

‘Or run upon the sharp wind of the north,’

is another question. He has not attempted it; I have no doubt he would have failed; but to have produced a poem infinitely the highest of its kind, and which no other poet could perhaps altogether have done so well, is surely very high praise. The *excellence is POPE's own, the inferiority is in the subject*; no one understood better that excellent rule of HORACE,

‘Sumite materiem, &c.’—BOWLES'S POPE.”

I give this extract for you to ponder on; in the mean time, I must ask, Why do you say I have pronounced the “subjects” of POPE's poetry *not poetical*? Why, in the language of that entertaining book, the “Quarrels of Authors,” “perplex controversy by a SUBTLE change of a word?” This art you have studied with the greatest success, as you have so well and so admirably illustrated it, (in another place of this identical criticism, which will

be hereafter spoken of) “ by breaking up of a sentence,” or contriving some ABSURDITY in the shape of inference, to get rid of it in a “ MOCK TRIUMPH !” *

Now if, in this illustration of the “ subtle arts,” by which “ controversy is perplexed,” you had not *left out, subtilely*, one small word, consisting of two letters “ (so),” my meaning would not have been “ perplexed,” nor would such disingenuous modes of meeting a question have assumed for a moment the appearance of a “ mock triumph !” Have the goodness to insert the little word “ so,” which you thus *subtilely* left out, and you will not do injustice to me or the public; for my meaning will then be (to which I adhere, notwithstanding all such profound arguments as you have brought against it) that the “ *subjects*” of satires are not so “ POETICAL” as those subjects which appeal to the imagination and passions.

And if this be admitted, it would follow, that a poem might be in its “ execution” (a word which,

* An example of *all these arts* is shewn in this very criticism of the Quarterly Review, leaving out the word “ so,” which makes all the difference; “ breaking up a sentence,” as is literally done, and *shamefully*, in what is said of Mr. BOWLES’s want of being “ explained himself,” when the sentence which elucidates his meaning is entirely left out; and this is done, by “ contriving *some absurdity*, in the shape of an inference, to get rid of it by a *mock triumph* !” Who that observes these *arts* does not instantly exclaim, These *little weapons*, against the laws of war, are *insidiously* practised in this WAR OF WORDS !—
QUARRELS OF AUTHORS, page 99.

together with "subject," though so "dark" to this logician, I have taken from POPE'S POSTSCRIPT to the *Odyssey*!) complete, and yet not be so *poetical* as a GREATER "subject," treated with powers of "execution" in every respect equal to the "subject!"

Then, it would follow that the "Rape of the Lock," though, in point of its peculiar fancy and consummate "execution," it be the most perfect work of the kind in any language, might yet, in point of poetry, remain for ever inferior to such a poem as the *Paradise Lost*; as much as the beautiful "Belinda," surrounded by white-gloved beaux, on the bosom of the silver Thames, in the summer sunshine, and whilst the sails are fanned by the wings of sylphs, is a picture, though delightful and poetical, far *less poetical* than that, *when*

"The planets in their stations list'ning stood,
AS THE BRIGHT POMP ASCENDED JUBILANT."

PARADISE LOST.

You say, "*we presume, we have found the 'fallacy' of Mr. BOWLES's theory!*" Without *presuming* at all, I will point out the *fallacy* of your's in two minutes. It is in confining the invariable principles of poetry to the "*criterion*" of talents, and in supposing I ever conceived that "manners," &c. might not be poetical, when all I said was, that PASSIONS were MORE so.

No *criterion* of talents, as talents, were spoken of or intended. I confined myself to the “ Principles of POETRY,” reckoning the more serious as the more sublime, pathetic, or beautiful, and, therefore, the most accordant to the higher class of poetry. But, in this article, no discrimination is made, either from ignorance or confusion of ideas, between the province of epic poetry and that of tragedy or comedy, between poems or novels, I might almost say between *verse* and *prose*; for if talents were to be made a “ criterion,” they would apply as much, undoubtedly, to the description of manners, as to the pourtraying of passions. Nay, to produce such a poem as *Hudibras*, or such a history as *Don Quixote*, would evince certainly as much talents as to produce the *Fairy Queen*. But in which would you look for the most essential poetry? Whom would you call the greatest poet?

But the very argument defeats itself. For, if “ fluctuating *manners* and *habits*” are subjects as poetical as works of the imagination and passions, the representation of these *manners and habits* can never be perfectly understood, or the propriety of the representation felt, except during the period in which they prevail. As such *manners and habits* fluctuate, the representation of them, however interesting at the time, must lose the greatest part of its charm. Is this the case with HOMER, or SOPHO-

CLES, or EURIPIDES, where the ακαματον πυρ never expires? Is this the case with THEOCRITUS, whose καλα τεμπεα, &c. are at this moment as beautiful and fresh as when they were first transcribed from living nature? These poets remain, and these will remain, whatever "habits" or "manners may prevail at different periods, and whatever generations may rise or pass away on the face of the globe.

"By the consent of the critics, (says Dr. JOHNSON,) the FIRST praise of genius is due to the "writer of an epic poem, as it requires an assemblage of all the powers which are singly sufficient "for any other composition."

Now even this great critic did not take into consideration the "execution," or performance, of the said epic; and, therefore, according to HIS views, not mine, BLACKMORE must be a greater poet than POPE! But this I deny; and must refer the reader to what I before had written concerning the subject and execution of a "poem." Whatever Dr. JOHNSON might have thought of the "universal consent of the critics," had he lived to see certain criticisms in the Review we speak of, he would have found some *radicals* in their profession, who cared not a *jot* for this "universal "consent;" who confounded epic, tragic, tragicomical, comic, elegiac, "IN-DOOR and out-of-door" nature, the province of morals, novels, and farces;

and asserted that, to the writer of moral epistles and satires, the *first praise* of genius is due, *quoad* poetry, as much as to the writer of the epic; and that, therefore, POPE may be, notwithstanding his avowed preference of in-door nature, of the "SAME 'FILE' WITH MILTON AND DANTE!!!"

According to this "discovery," all former critics may as well hide their diminished heads, ancient and modern; but this indeed, in the language of the Reviewer, will "BE THE TRIUMPH OF 'THE FUTURE!'" In the mean time, HOMER will remain on his "throne of ADAMANT;" for it must be indeed the "triumph of the future" that would place on the same throne the most poetical writer of moral essays or satires the world ever produced.

The *principles of poetry*, in this sense, are INVARIABLE and ETERNAL.

* This definition, I think, (*pace dixerim*,) is not quite accurate; for, in my opinion, it would have been more just to have said, "the highest praise of poetry is due to the *successful* writer "of an epic poem."

Dr. JOHNSON speaks with accurate distinction, and with his usual sense and eloquence, when he says, "Paradise Lost is a "poem, with respect to design, which may claim the FIRST "place, and with respect to *performance*, the second, among the "productions of the human mind. His 'subject' is the fate of "worlds, and the revolutions of heaven and earth!"

"The *subject* of this poem is *universally* and *perpetually* interesting;" and as "light and shade" is not understood by my critic, any more than "subject and execution," I may just mention some further expressions: "In a GREAT work there are "vicissitudes of *luminous* and *opaque* parts."—LIFE OF MILTON.

If the higher principles of poetry be thus *eternal*, it follows that he who exerts his talents on the highest poetical subject; he who sustains a flight equal to that subject; who, in pursuing it, executes, in the most perfect manner, the most sublime subject; he who thus conceives and executes such, and so great, a subject, will stand superior to him who may have displayed as much judgment and powers of *execution* on a gayer and more evanescent theme; and therefore MILTON, and DANTE, and HOMER, and SHAKESPEARE, must stand, in the intrinsic excellence of their art, superior to POPE.

As the critic cannot see why POPE may not be classed in the same file with MILTON and DANTE, we can only wonder, whilst he was so animated with his subject, that he had not also put him in the same file with HOMER and SOPHOCLES, for he might with as much propriety have done one as the other.

And now, Sir, one more word about "principles of poetry." Do you think that there is any art which is not founded on "*some invariable principles?*" There are "invariable principles of painting," "invariable principles of poetry," and let me whisper to you, in every honest mind "invariable principles of criticism," *two* of which are, not to deal dishonestly and fraudulently with the arguments of the writer whose opinion you con-

trovert; not to cut the sentences in halves, and and think to "reply" to them

"By a fool-born jest."

There is another "*invariable principle*" of criticism, which ought to be constantly kept in mind. It is this, "not to write on a subject till you know "a little about it!"

As to my own "principles of poetry," suffer me to try once more to set you a little right. DARWIN'S principle of trying poetry universally by *painting* is limited and confined indeed; for, by such a criterion, the highest part of poetry, which relates to the imagination and passions, must be excluded. But, with respect to the principles you combat being limited and confined, nothing was ever so remote from the truth.

The eye of the poet may be truly said to glance from

"Earth to heaven,

"From heaven to earth."

The ideal and visible worlds are his province. In the ideal, beings of imagination, connected with images of terror, power, glory, beauty; such as "ride the storm," or "play in the plighted clouds," wake at his bidding. In the visible world, objects and pictures, the most magnificent, or the most lovely in the works of GOD, are before him,—all passions, and affections, and emotions, and sym-

pathies of the heart, are the great poet's peculiar subjects.* The principles, then, I have built on, when closely examined, will be found to be those of LONGINUS and HORACE; which are derived primarily from ETERNAL NATURE. But works of art, which can only belong to the "visible diurnal sphere," are not excluded; these, however, become poetical, as they associate more or less with ideas of power, magnificence, beauty, all of which have their origin in NATURE. Thus, "the aque-ducts, temples, obelisks," of which MILTON has made so fine a use, become more poetical, as combined with *moral associations* or picturesque effect.

To these succeed high moral satire, habits and manners and characters of artificial life, which may be, in the master's work, mixed and combined, almost *ad infinitum*.

But as poetry approaches this province, it necessarily assumes more the character of wit. And to shew that this opinion will not be the "TRIUMPH OF THE FUTURE," as this writer affectedly calls it, I will quote only one passage from that critic, who was the great sublime he drew, and who was, at least, as *true a critic* as himself:—

"I have digressed thus far, for the sake of shewing as I observed before, that a *decrease* of the pathetic in great orators and poets often ends in the MORAL KIND

* Yet, notwithstanding this, I am accused of confining all my ideas of poetry to external nature!

OF WRITING. Thus the *Odyssey*, furnishing us with rules of morality, drawn from that course of life, which the SUITORS lead in THE PALACE OF ULYSSES, has in some degree *the air of a COMEDY*, where the various MANNERS of men are *INGENIOUSLY* and *FAITHFULLY DESCRIBED*.”—*Longinus*.

The reader will see from the *sketch* I have drawn, that the works of art and manners of men are not—they were never thought of being—excluded from the province of poetry; but be they as poetical as they may, the greater passions are *more so*, and I only contend for this; and that, therefore, POPE, exquisite as he is, cannot be ranked in the same file with the poet of Macbeth, King Lear, or Paradise Lost. As to my definition being limited, I would request to know whose definitions are most limited, those which are bounded by the vastness of heaven, or those which are confined to a London square?

Now, I repeat, nothing was said by me about “a criterion of talents!”—It is probably as difficult to write a good comedy as a fine tragedy—to paint a Falstaff as a Lear. POPE found it more difficult to translate those parts of HOMER which were *least poetical*; but it is not these that placed HOMER on his eternal throne. It may require, for aught I know, as much talent to describe the “habits and “manners of the suitors,” and their “in-door “nature;” but where does the poetry (in the last

books of the Odyssey) lie? Every one will instantly exclaim, in the half-famished dog that recognises his old master, and dies, having seen him; in the affectionate wife, bending over the bow of her long-lost husband; in that husband, after so long an absence, a forlorn stranger in his own hall, essaying and bending it; in the cottage of Eumæus, &c. These are scenes, upon which the feelings rest.—By my “theory,” as the critic calls it, which is only common sense, nothing is excluded. Pictures, passions, characters, manners, habits, morals, have all their places. But the characteristic difference, as far as poetry is concerned, is pointed out.

Having mentioned the Odyssey, and quoted what LONGINUS has so justly said, I may here make some observations on this subject, as they connect themselves with what has been before laid down.

The Odyssey, indeed, as POPE truly says, is not to be compared with the Iliad. “The poems are “totally different, but both are *master-pieces* in “their kind.” Nor is the Rape of the Lock to be compared with the Paradise Lost; but when uncertain claims are made, these works are to be taken into consideration, whether epic, tragic, dramatic, moral, or pathetic, which place the poet HIGHEST in his art,* supposing the execution of either equal.

* We may here observe a remark of POPE on this passage, in his postscript to the Odyssey. Of LONGINUS he says, “that in

between classic & romantic

Associations of Nature may be varied, combined, mixed, almost to infinitude, yet the basis be the same, as to poetical principles, which are referred through all to the source of what is sub-

“his own *particular taste*, and with respect to the SUBLIME, he “(LONGINUS) preferred the *Iliad*,” &c.

But POPE adds this particular distinction, “that HORACE “gives the preference rather to the *Odyssey*, in the *Epistle* to “*Lollius*, and in the *Art of Poetry*!”

It appears to me that POPE seemed to feel that the criticism of LONGINUS on the sublime in poetry, and what he said of the inferiority of *manners* to *passions*, touched his own character as a poet, who certainly was more distinguished for painting “*manners*,” than reaching the great sublime of his art; and therefore he covertly brings in HORACE’s opinion, which he thinks is in favour of a poem, a considerable part of which is founded on manners.

But HORACE, in what he said of the *Odyssey*, either in the *Epistle* to *Lollius*, or in the *Art of Poetry*, had not in view poetry, but morals only. In the *Epistle* to *Lollius*, who appears from the text to be a young man likely to be led away by his passions, he especially points out the example of *virtue* and *wisdom*: how Ulysses avoided the cup of *Circe*, and turned from the song of the *Syrens*! Then he proceeds to *speaking* of the intemperance of the *suitors*, &c. Morals and not poetry were the objects of this epistle, addressed to a young man, who thus might learn from his own early studies, not so much the lessons of taste, but, what he more needed, regulation of conduct. In the *Art of Poetry*, when HORACE speaks particularly of the unassuming introduction of the *Odyssey*, in opposition to the bombast style which he reproves, he fixes the imagination directly on the *poetical* parts of the *Odyssey*, arising from an humble beginning, like fire rising from smoke,—and expressly says of HOMER, that from hence he draws—

“*speciosa miracula,*

“*Antiphaten, Scyllam, et cum Cyclope Charybdin.*”

And HORACE has not left unrecorded his precise definition of poetry, when he says so distinctly,

lime, beautiful, and pathetic; and thus, the eternal line of poetic excellence will NOT "be defined by "some *arbitrary criterion*," nor will the inquiry terminate "in *false criticism and absurd depreciation*," but by unvarying principles of "JUST "CRITICISM AND FAIR APPRECIATION."

Having thus examined in return this "true "critic's" theory, let me be indulged in comparing what he calls "Mr. BOWLES's Nature," and what may surely call *his*—IN-DOOR NATURE.

"Nature," he profoundly observes, "is a critical "term which the BOWLES's have been two thousand years EXPLAINING!"

Who and what the BOWLES's are, I know as little as this arch-cockney, when he "sits down to

"Neque, si quis scribat, uti nos,
"Sermoni propiora, PUTES hunc esse Poëtam.
"Ingenium cui sit, cui mens divinator, atque os
"Magna sonaturum, des NOMINIS HUIUS HONOREM."

And he brings an example more particular still, that there might never be a misunderstanding of his meaning in appreciating the high rank of the Father of Poetry:

"Non, si priores Mæonius tenet
"Sedes Homerus, Pindaricæ latent,
"Cæque et Alcæi minaces,
"Stesichorique graves Camoenæ.
"Nec, si quid olim lusit Anacreon,
"Delevit ætas; spirat adhuc amor,
"Vivuntque commissi calores
"Æoliæ fidibus puellæ."

Now, would any one think, that because HORACE gave the first place to HOMER, he "*depreciates*," or sought to depreciate, the exquisite beauty of SAPPHO?

“square the circle,” knows of Nature; but this I am sure, the family of the BOWLES’s are honoured by the remark, inasmuch as they may be considered lovers of the great prototype of all that is sublime or beautiful in art.

If any “explanation” were necessary, the BOWLES’s need not be consulted, when even in criticism the expressive language was at hand, from authority that will not be doubted :

- “ First, follow NATURE, and your judgment frame
- “ By her just standard, WHICH IS STILL the same.
- “ UNERRING NATURE, still divinely bright,
- “ One clear, unchanged, and universal light,
- “ Life, force, and beauty, must to all impart,
- “ At once the SOURCE, and END, and TEST, of ART ! !”

Essay on Criticism.

This general opinion, thus admirably and elegantly expressed, will be quite sufficient to justify me in what I have laid down, even if it should not be so clear as I wish to make it; and if the BOWLES’s have been for two thousand years ringing chimes and changes on the term “Nature,” they may well imagine that some few others may indeed hope to succeed in their “*favourite studies* of “squaring the circle,” before they can comprehend it—certainly they must look beyond that “Nature” which is bounded by “four walls!” and which, blind to the magnificence of the Creation, they facetiously designate as “In-door” “Nature,” and think a poet, who preferred this

Nature, to be in the same FILE with HOMER, and SHAKESPEARE, and MILTON, and DANTE!

Turning from a critic of this description, I would here address some particular observations to the reader.

Mr. CAMPBELL made an unfortunate appeal to MILTON, with respect to his having, in his sublimest parts of *Paradise Lost*, drawn images *from art*. I hope to be excused, if, in speaking on this point, I examine somewhat more closely MILTON's examples in general.

There are some passages which, without considering the cause, strike almost every reader with a kind of instinctive and involuntary dislike. Some of these passages will perhaps instantly occur. Who does not draw back with peculiar distaste from those passages where the Satanic army bring their great guns charged with the gunpowder? Why is this? Because an image of art is brought too close, and too immediately and distinctly to our view! The same may be said, when the Creator applies the "golden compasses" to mark the orb of the world! The image is taken from art, and brought too *distinctly* into our view! The same may be said, when Death and Sin build a "bridge" from Hell to this world!

These images from art are all too manifestly and too minutely in sight. But this is not the case in general, where MILTON introduces images

from art. They are placed before us, if I may say so, by a *single* evanescent touch—you are not left to *dwell* on them—and most commonly some epithet is added, to *generalise*, them with higher imagery.

Thus, if the trumpet is mentioned, an indistinct grandeur is given to it by the epithet “the ARCH-
“ANGEL trumpet.” The *wheels* of the *brazen chariot* are alive—“The madding wheels of brazen
“chariots raged.”

If Satan lifts his shield, it is the “*rocky orb*
“of vast circumference.” The “swords” are
“fiery;” the “shields,” “two BRIGHT SUNS,
“THAT BLAZE opposite.”

The adjunct, generally taken from some magnificent object in Nature subdues what has a too mechanical appearance, and this tends to exalt the image, as well as to prevent the imagination dwelling too minutely on it.

Gold, the most precious stones, are often added as epithets, where the naked image from *art* wants exalting: in other cases, a word is joined for the sake of taking off and shadowing, if I may say so, the too distinctive glare of an *artificial* image.

It is for want of attending to this nice propriety, (which in MILTON, with the exception of some passages, appears instinctive,) that COWLEY is generally so absurd in his imagery,—as when he makes art and nature coachman and postillion, &c.

If COWLEY had used the image of the angel *unfurling* Satan's standard from the "*staff*," he would, probably, have *minutely* described it. MILTON scarce touches the image; but how does he instantly exalt it, by associating it with the most striking and awful image from Nature:

" A Cherub tall,
 " Who, forthwith, from the *glittering* staff unfurl'd
 " The *Imperial* ensign, which, full high advanced,
 " Shone, like a meteor, streaming to the *wind*!"

The building of Pandemonium is associated with ideas of super-earthly POWER. When it rises

" LIKE AN EXHALATION, to the sound
 " Of dulcet symphonies,"

every thing accords with the ideas of immense size and grandeur.

Is not this in some measure destroyed, when MILTON speaks more minutely of pilasters, and Doric pillars, and architraves, and cornice, and frieze? And how repulsive is the image (it is to me) of Belial himself digging out the gold, pounding the ore, and scumming the dross; and the simile of the "*sound-board*," and *row* of pipes of the organ!

One image is peculiar, and very sublime, in the use of an image drawn from art, where Satan

" above the rest,
 " In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
 " Stood, LIKE A TOW'R."

Here is an instant image of immoveable strength: but if the "*tower*" had been particularised, by one

stroke introducing battlements, pinnacles, corbels, &c. the image would have lost so much grandeur; but “stood, like a tower,” at once conveys a distinct idea of stately and immoveable strength, by a single word; and it may here be observed, having spoken of the “sounding-board” of an organ, that almost all *musical instruments*, as *sounding*, (not otherwise,) are poetical. Why? Because the sound instantly assimilates itself with some kindred feeling or passion—as the flute with tenderness, the viol with sprightliness, the trumpet with heroic animation. Scott, of Amwell, has made a fine and original use of the drum by the association of sadness and pity—

“ I hate that drum’s discordant sound,
“ Parading round, and round, and round.”

The late Mrs. SHERIDAN has given to the sound “*of the violin*” a poetical feeling, which is as new as beautiful and affecting, where she speaks of her brother, bringing forth those tones *that live beyond the touch!*

“ Ah! who, like him, can teach the liquid notes,
“ So soft, so sweet, so eloquently clear,
“ To LIVE BEYOND THE TOUCH, and gently float
“ In dying modulations on the ear?”

But let us look a little farther abroad.

Take any work of art, how little, considered as a work of art, can you make it POETICAL, without adjuncts from Nature!

Take useful or decorative architecture, statuary, pictures, carvings, music, bridges, aqueducts, canals, &c.

Take an elegant mansion, or an old abbey :—It would be ridiculous to say which, as an object, is most poetical. Undoubtedly that which is rendered more interesting by various moral associations and picturesque beauty. Time, that leans on the reft battlements, brings with it a thousand associations of sublimity and melancholy. These are most poetically affecting! Even external adventitious circumstances of Nature make the picture more peculiarly and intensely interesting:

“ Scarce a *sickly straggling* flower

“ Decks the rough castle’s rifted tower.”—WARTON.

“ He, who would see Melrose aright,

“ Must see it by *the pale moonlight*.”—SCOTT.

But, one of the finest pictures of modern poetry, where Nature makes the works of art so much more effectually poetical, is to be found in the Gladiator dying in the Coliseum, who remembers, as he dies, “ the scenes of his infancy, the hut of
“ his mother, on the banks of the Danube.”

“ I see before me the Gladiator lie :

“ He leans upon his hand his manly brow ;

“ Consents to death, but conquers agony,

“ And his droop’d head sinks gradually low :

“ And from his side the last drops, ebbing slow

“ From the sad gash, fall heavy, one by one,

" Like the first drops of a thunder-shower ; and now
 " The arena swims around him.—He is gone
 " Ere ceased the inhuman sound which hail'd the wretch
 who won.
 " He heard it, but he heeded not. His eyes
 " Were with his heart, and that was far away :
 " He reck'd not of the life he lost, nor prize ;
 " But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
 " There were his young barbarians all at play,
 " There was their Dacian mother. He, their sire,
 " Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday !
 " All this rush'd with his blood. Shall he expire,
 " And unaveng'd ? Arise, ye Goths, and glut your ire."*

In the " Faithful Shepherdess" of BEAUMONT
 and FLETCHER are two similes, immediately suc-
 ceeding each other, one from a beautiful image
 in nature, the other from a common one of *human*
 art—

" Holy virgin, I will dance
 " Round about these woods as quick
 " AS THE BREAKING LIGHT, and prick
 " Down the lawns, and down the vales,
 " Faster than the WIND-MILL SAILS !"

It is the " sails careering in the wind" that gives
 such *poetical* effect to the last image. How ex-
 quisite is a picture from the finest poem of the
 present age—

" It was the hour
 " Of vespers, but no vesper-bell was heard,
 " Nor *other* SOUND, than of the *passing stream*,
 " Or *stork*, who, *flapping with wide wing the air*,
 " Sought her broad nest upon the SILENT tower."—SOUTHEY.

* This has been already spoken of.

A clock, as a work of art, is not very poetical; but its sound at night is poetical in the highest degree: more so when associated with moral feelings—the time past—the time perpetually going on—Why is this? Because we hear the sound—

“As if an angel spoke.”

A striking circumstance of this kind is to be found in Wilson's *City of the Plague*. The clock is *motionless*! There is no poetry in this circumstance, abstractedly; but how deeply, how affectingly, is it rendered poetry, when the circumstance that has caused it to cease is taken into consideration, and is felt to be the strongest proof of the death and silence of a multitudinous city almost devastated!

This point is so certain, so clear, that I feel almost lessened in self-estimation, that it should appear necessary to bring any proof of what ninety-nine men in a hundred, of common sense and taste, acknowledge and feel.

The two greatest works of art that are introduced in ancient poetry are the *carved* cup in THEOCRITUS, and the shield of Achilles in HOMER. But how is the description of these works of art rendered more peculiarly poetical, by animating them,—by making the objects represented in them *live*, and become as if a part of Nature! The dead carving is not remembered,

when we see the old fisher, with his swelling muscles, near the gray rock, not on the cup, but as in the very landscapes of Nature. It is the same in the shield: the *creation*, the sun, the moon, the concourse of citizens, the shepherds, &c. all are represented, not as in dead art, but as living and moving. And it is this necessity of losing as much as possible the idea of the work of art, and fixing the eye and thought on the works of Nature herself, which give the only interesting and most poetical charm.

This position has been disputed in two literary journals, to which we have been taught to look for sound principles of critical investigation.

The first, the Edinburgh Review, now admits what it at first did not : at least, in the review of CAMPBELL's Specimens, it is said,

"They incline to my opinion!" I have no doubt, the more they think of it, or the more Mr. JEFFREY thinks of it, the more he will be inclined to admit it. I have the same opinion of the most intelligent writers of the Quarterly Review, and indeed of every one, except that "unfortunate wight" who was permitted to "fret his hour upon the stage," to talk such strange nonsense about "In-door Nature!!"

To this gentleman I shall now point out, by way of apology for representations that may be to him as dark as Muggletonian dreams, some images

both from Art and Nature, which himself may estimate.

COWLEY calls *Nature* a *postillion*, and *Art* a *coachman*:

“ Let the *postillion*, NATURE, mount, and let

“ The *coachman*, ART, be set—.”

COWLEY, whose “ language of the heart” we still love, notwithstanding these vagaries, seems very fond of images drawn from “ in-door” nature. So he says, speaking of the “ blue sky,” it would make an admirable waistcoat for an arch-angel:

“ He cuts out a silk mantle from the skies,

“ Where the most *sprightly azure* pleas’d the eyes.”

A rainbow also forms a most elegant scarf, *fitted*, from the same *pattern*, with the same scissors of art:—

“ Of a new rainbow, ere it fret and fade,

“ The *choicest piece* CUT OUT, a scarf is made.”

HORACE says,

“ NATURAM expellas furca, tamen usque redibit;”

and even here, in spite of COWLEY’s bad taste, which I have no doubt the critic will approve, NATURE steps in, and we have one beautiful image, “ the rainbow, *ere it fret and fade!*”

To turn from the poet to the critic. I have no doubt some of the images from art here brought

together, have been much more clear to him, and much more satisfactory, than the "dreams," of which our extracts from works of poetry were before filled.

Thus, *Art*, the postillion, and *Nature*, the coachman, and the angel in a new cloak of SKY-BLUE, must have been images probably congenial to his heart; and who can leave the subject without endeavouring to impress on the imagination, that perhaps the most sublime image of all the works of "in-door nature," is that "king of shreds and patches," who once, for a sight of "rural nature," went as far as BRENTFORD! and as this heroic personage is, doubtless, of all images of "in-door nature" the most sublime; so the "bird" which attends him, though not so sublime as "*ministerium fulminis alitem*," must be admitted, of all images of in-door Nature, to be the most *beautiful*.

This bird, which in poetical beauty "arches its head" more than "certain swans," is vulgarly called a *goose*; and if the *terrible* be thought as necessary for this poetical assemblage, "Hell" yawns from beneath,

"*Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo!*"

As I would have the critical admirer of the SUBLIME, and BEAUTIFUL, and TERRIBLE, of "in-door" nature, to be like the LONGINUS of POPE,

"The great sublime he draws,"

I know not how I could better please him, than by comparing him with that emblem of “in-door” beauty attendant on its triumphant master, and generally described “as hot as heavy,” the GOOSE!!

Begging the reader to pardon this involuntary association, I must proceed to expose, not criticism, but that which is worse than absurdity, the utter destitution of all feelings fair and honourable as a controversialist. I must expose a species of duplicity, which has no example in the character of him whom this writer defends, and whom, I fear, from the *soreness* which he evinces, when some obvious parts of his character are touched, he more nearly resembles. I make the following remarks on the criticism in the Quarterly Review with pain.

Reader, in the “Invariable Principles of Poetry” this passage occurs :

“Now I would put to you a few plain questions ; and I would beseech you not to ask whether I mean this or that, for I think you must now *understand what I do mean*. I would beseech you also not to write *beside the question*, but answer simply and plainly whether you think that the sylph of POPE, “trembling over the froth of a coffee-cup,” be an image as poetical as the delicate and quaint Ariel, who sings

“Where the bee sucks, there lurk I ;”
or the elves of SHAKESPEARE—

“Spirits of another sort,
“That with the morning light make sport.”

“ Whether you think the description of a game of cards be as *poetical*, supposing the execution in the artists equal, as a description of a *walk* in a *forest*; Whether an age of refinement be as conducive to pictures of poetry, as a period less refined? Whether passions, affections, &c., of the human heart, be not a higher source of what is pathetic or sublime in poetry, than manners and habits, or manners that apply only to artificial life?

“ If you agree with me, it is all I meant to say; if not, we differ, and always shall, on the principles of poetical criticism.”

I believe most sincerely that every reader, without exception, will understand my meaning in the passage, when taken together.

But the critic in the Quarterly Review takes the *first sentence*, and no more—then makes a poor and affected banter, that “ Mr. BOWLES wants explaining *himself* ;” when, but for this his dishonest and dishonourable stratagem, no one would or could have doubted his meaning!

This is what a writer, who has written “ On the Quarrels of Authors,” calls “ breaking up a sentence,” for the purpose of securing a momentary “ mock-triumph!” Are such “ *arts*” of criticism, well as they seem to be understood, worthy a scholar—a gentleman? worthy a publication as distinguished as the Quarterly Review?

Well might this same writer say, “ We suspect “ Mr. BOWLES does not like criticism!”

Such criticism, connected with such stratagems, he "DOES NOT LIKE," and trusts he never shall.

What this "TRUE CRITIC, of ENLARGED views," calls "FASHIONABLE CRITICISM," is, in general, equally abhorrent from the principles of every upright man; and, distinguished as are some of the masterly and eloquent articles in the Quarterly Review, as far as poetry and works of taste are concerned, the writers have at least evinced their *sincerity* in one respect, that is, to have "NO PRINCIPLES" at all! either in poetry or criticism.

Having thus replied to what appears most essential in the criticism of the Quarterly, I would willingly part with my Reviewer; but a few words more may be added on his concluding observations respecting the poetical character of him whose life and writings have caused these animadversions.

It is said, "In vain would our *populace* of poets " *estrangle* themselves from POPE, because

"He stoop'd to truth, and moralized his song."

Answer. Where he *stoop'd to truth*, and moralized his song, his province is no longer that of imagination and PASSION; it is, and it must be, "truth and morals," and not "imagination and "passion," the highest sources of the terrible, sublime, pathetic, and beautiful in poetry. But who, "among the *populace of poets*," would "estrangle" themselves from POPE I know not. He has attained an unquestioned, an unrivalled

place, in his own line of poetry, from which I should pity any one who could wish or attempt to remove him. His excellence in his art is unrivalled, and I, for one, have admitted that he stands before every poet in his line of art, ancient or modern.

Is HORACE no great poet? Is JUVENAL no great poet? Are OVID, TIBULLUS, CATULLUS, no great poets? I have already said, and I must repeat, his *Eloisa* stands as much above the elegies of CATULLUS, TIBULLUS, and OVID, as his satires are above those of JUVENAL and HORACE. Will the reader believe, I have said this distinctly and unreservedly before?

If, in looking over what is remarked specifically of the Satires, I have dwelt too much on his bitter tone of personal invective, it was not for want of feeling his beauties that I did not say more, but because I thought, on these points, it was excellence that all admitted. I have endeavoured to shew upon what principles his line of poetry could not be pronounced the most excellent, whilst HOMER, and SHAKESPEARE, and SOPHOCLES, and EURIPIDES, live; and to prevent that confusion which often arises when we pronounce that this poet, or that painter, is at the head of his art! But, I should think that not only the “populace of poets,” but all who have any discriminating sense and taste; who, whilst they know what

distinguishes MILTON and DANTE, know also what distinguishes POPE; who read him, and recur to him, as much as *they* do who think he is “dis-
 “paraged,” have admitted, and cheerfully admit,
 “that he carried his art to the highest point of
 “excellence,” as far as his own excellence, in his
 own line, was concerned; that all who went be-
 fore, in this line, never reached, and all who come
 after probably never will reach, this excellence;
 that he will still remain unrivalled for “the cor-
 “rectness and delicacy of his taste, as well as the
 “vigour of his judgment;” that in “poetical ex-
 “pression” and versification, (with some abate-
 ments in the latter,) he will be superior, as long
 as poetical expression and exquisite versification
 distinguish his species of excellence; but that,
 nevertheless, “nature,” not manners—passion and
 imagination, not “truth” or morals—will afford
 the highest specimens of the works of a great poet,
 provided the execution equals the subject, in spite
 of Quarterly Reviewers and all the FAMILY of
 GILCHRISTS, or D’ISRAELIS, in the world!

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